

# Naval War College Review

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# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Autumn 2002

Volume LV, Number 4



## Cover

*The year 2002 marks the first century of destroyers in the U.S. Navy, beginning with the commissioning of “Destroyer No. 1,” USS Bainbridge. This milestone is being marked in Newport by “Destroyers: 100 Years,” a series of commemorative events initiated by the Surface Warfare Officers School Command and the Surface Navy Association. The Naval War College is participating in a number of ways, including an exhibition in the museum and this issue’s cover—a portrait of the destroyer USS Mahan (DD 364), seen in U.S. Destroyers: Mahan Class, painted by the American maritime artist Jack Coggins in 1991. (The destroyer astern, on the reverse, was not identified by the artist.)*

*The pictured Mahan, second of that name and the first of its class, was commissioned in 1936 and participated in the Pacific War from 1941 until its sinking on 7 December 1944 after an attack by kamikaze aircraft off Leyte. The painting was given by the USS Mahan Association to the Naval War College Foundation, which made it available to the museum for exhibit.*

*By courtesy of the Naval War College Museum and Naval War College Foundation.*

# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

**Autumn 2002**

Volume LV, Number 4



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*Naval War College Review*  
Code 32, Naval War College  
686 Cushing Rd., Newport, RI 02841-1207  
Fax: 401.841.1071  
DSN exchange, all lines: 948  
Website: <http://www.nwc.navy.mil/press>  
*Editor, Circulation, or Business*  
401.841.2236  
[press@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:press@nwc.navy.mil)

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To call the struggle against terrorism "America's War," perhaps even a war at all, is to miss its full significance, argues one of the world's most distinguished military historians. It is a global confrontation between those who believe in the values of the Enlightenment and those who detest and fear them. In this confrontation armed force must inevitably play a part, but it can never be won by militaries alone—not even those of the United States.

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Rising education, easier travel, new communications media, and liberalizing voices are quickly making the Arab "street" a true "public sphere"—a force with which governments, and the West, will have to reckon. The good news, argues a scholar of the Muslim world, is that channels exist by which the West can address the Arab public. But that public, better informed, will be quick to notice gaps between statement and action.

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"Coercive diplomacy"—a range of nonmilitary options for increasing the pressure on a recalcitrant state, with credible force in the wings—is at this juncture a better option for the United States than a focus on unilateral intervention to topple the Iraqi regime. It may achieve the same ends, and even if it does not, the substantial attempt should elicit allied and regional support for whatever steps then become necessary.

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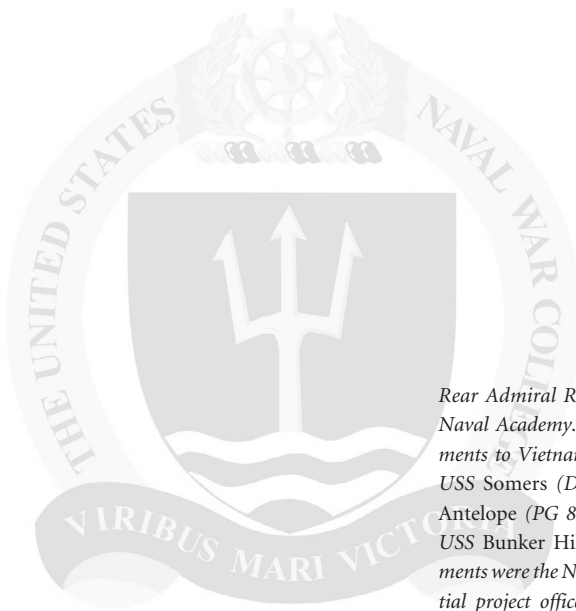
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Rear Admiral Rempt is a 1966 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. Initial assignments included deployments to Vietnam aboard USS Coontz (DLG 9) and USS Somers (DDG 34). He later commanded USS Antelope (PG 86), USS Callaghan (DDG 994), and USS Bunker Hill (CG 52). Among his shore assignments were the Naval Sea Systems Command as the initial project officer for the Mark 41 Vertical Launch System; Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) staff as the Aegis Weapon System program coordinator; director of the Prospective Commanding Officer/Executive Officer Department, Surface Warfare Officers Schools Command; and Director, Anti-Air Warfare Requirements Division (OP-75) on the CNO's staff. Rear Admiral Rempt also served in the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, where he initiated development of Naval Theater Ballistic Missile Defense, continuing those efforts as Director, Theater Air Defense on the CNO's staff. More recently, he was Program Executive Officer, Theater Air Defense, the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Theater Combat Systems, the first Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Missile Defense, and Director, Surface Warfare (N76) on the CNO's staff. Rear Admiral Rempt assumed duties as the forty-eighth President of the Naval War College on 22 August 2001.

He holds master's degrees in systems analysis from Stanford University and in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College.

## PRESIDENT'S FORUM

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*As I have noted in the past, the Naval War College has two primary missions: to educate future leaders and to define future forces.*

IN A PREVIOUS ISSUE OF THE *REVIEW*, I discussed the efforts now under way in Newport to help define future courses that our Navy could follow to transform itself to meet more effectively the demands of the new century. The strategic landscape has been changed by many factors: political, economic, and technological.

How the service responds to these changes is critical to our continued contribution to national security.

The Navy Vision Project has engaged faculty, staff, and defense experts from around the nation in a series of workshops and study groups. Collectively, these visionaries have identified six major options in which additional investment could be made. Each would define a different Navy than the one we have today. However, a fundamental truth underpins all potential decisions: the Navy of tomorrow will be derived largely from the Navy of today. Necessary changes will be made incrementally over a number of years, and the amount of resources that can be applied to “recapitalization” will, realistically, be on the order of 10 percent to 15 percent of the Navy’s research and procurement budgets. By a huge margin, the greatest portion of budget expenditures each year will go to maintaining and operating ships, aircraft, and weapons systems now in inventory and to recruiting, training, and retaining our great sailors. These expenditures are essential to enable us to continue to meet the demands of the Terror War.

Our challenge as a maritime service is to apply skillfully the relatively small discretionary portion of the budget so as to get maximum impact on future capabilities. Just as in navigating aboard ship, when a few degrees of change in base course can result in hundreds or thousands of miles of difference in the ultimate destination, the Navy Vision Project is working to provide possible “midcourse corrections” to the Navy’s future track, to move toward the most effective Navy for our nation.



## SIX OPTIONS

For over two hundred years the Navy has provided America's leaders a balanced force capable of accomplishing a wide variety of missions across the entire spectrum of conflict, from such low-cost and low-risk activities as evacuation of noncombatants from areas of potential conflict to the full-scale engagement of an enemy with weapons of mass destruction. This high degree of flexibility will be even more valuable in the future. Naval forces provide national freedom of action for the application of military power in an increasingly uncertain and complex world. To be most effective, our naval forces should be tailored and focused to meet the most likely scenarios. The Navy could focus its investment or change its strategic direction by taking the following courses:

**Lead Revitalized Maritime Security.** This option strengthens the nation's maritime shield by revitalizing the full range of capabilities that provide "maritime defense in depth." The underlying assumption driving this option is that, unlike

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*The Navy would enhance its capabilities to provide missile defense of the United States, and of allies and forces around the world. This option assumes that additional and substantial attacks on targets within the United States are likely, if not inevitable.*

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many wars of the past century in which conflict took place far from U.S. shores, it is increasingly likely that future battles could take place near or on U.S. territory. A major focus of the maritime security emphasis would be on the screening and control of seaborne com-

merce. This includes merchant ships, containers, and superports, as well as maritime companies and their finances. Success in this endeavor would require a sophisticated and robust information collection and dissemination network and the establishment of the ability to intercept and interdict incoming threats from forward overseas and close to U.S. shores. Procurement of ships sized to meet specific needs, between the capabilities of Coast Guard cutters and multimission Navy destroyers, would be necessary. This capability would also enable the United States and its allies to conduct preventive operations against groups, states, and nonstate actors deemed to represent a threat to U.S. security.

**Expand Sea-Basing.** The key to sustained combat operations has always been the logistical support of the engaged forces. The Navy's historical ability to operate for extended periods at sea is well recognized, and this capability could be expanded to provide joint and combined force commanders with the ability to commence military operations from secure offshore "sea bases." This option is predicated on the assumption that for political and economic reasons, the United States is less likely than ever before to use an extensive network of

overseas bases. Sea-basing would allow for the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of both Marine Corps and Army forces at sea. Key components of this capability would include high-speed ships (thirty-five knots and above), prepositioning at sea, and forward staging aboard ship. While existing "large-deck" ships such as aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships could be reconfigured to support some "sea-basing" missions, entirely new (and very large) ships may be needed to receive large intertheater airlift aircraft at sea. Use of V-22 vertical-lift aircraft, new high-speed lighterage, and the enhanced capabilities of the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle would provide the capability for forces ashore to be sustained for extended periods.

***Continue Power Projection Focus.*** This option most closely resembles the Navy of today. Its underlying assumption is that the primary battlefields of the future will remain overseas. Investment in this area would focus on rapid application of decisive force by augmenting the force with Tomahawk missile-armed cruisers and long-range guided munitions aboard destroyers; dedicated platforms such as high-speed vessels, cruise-missile-launching nuclear submarines, and nuclear-powered aircraft carriers armed with Joint Strike Fighters and unmanned combat air vehicles. Increased emphasis would be placed on supporting special operations forces and Marine Corps expeditionary warfare forces. A power projection focus would provide decisive naval power to defeat adversaries anywhere in the world.

***Ensure Access for Other Forces.*** Additional investment in this area would focus on increasing the ability of the Navy and Marine Corps to gain access to geographic areas of national interest, both in "permissive" environments when U.S. forces are welcome and in "forced-entry" scenarios in which opposing combat forces must be overcome. This option assumes that the Navy will remain "forward deployed" in areas of potential conflict. Gaining and maintaining such access, and providing the means for the sustainment of the force once ashore, will require enhancements to the Navy's capabilities in missile defense, mine warfare, surface warfare, undersea warfare, air traffic control, ship routing, and command and control. With this investment the Navy could ensure access to the theater of conflict for our joint forces and allies. Fully capable multimission ships teamed with capable littoral combat ships will be essential in this option.

***Provide Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance for the Nation.*** Properly configured, naval forces could provide the nation with forward-deployed forces focused on winning the information "battle of the first salvo." The underlying assumption of this option is the recognition that technological development will provide the means for long-term surveillance of the theater of operations, thus providing commanders with a "real-time" picture of emerging events. The

sea-based portion of a larger theaterwide architecture would include conventional radars, acoustic and electronic sensors, and a futuristic expeditionary sensor grid. It would employ sea-bottom sensing arrays, unmanned vehicles (air, surface, and subsurface), ground systems, and the necessary networking and processing capability. Defensive forces would protect and monitor the sensor network, and offensive capabilities would be collocated to exploit information and rapidly respond to threats using naval forces, including missiles, special operations forces, Marines, and tactical aircraft.

***Refine Homeland Defense.*** With this emphasis, a future Navy would enhance its capabilities to provide missile defense of the United States, as well as of allies and forces around the world. This option assumes that additional and substantial attacks on targets within the United States are likely, if not inevitable. The homeland-defense option would continue strategic deterrence through the use of ballistic missile submarines and offensive counter-missile forces to disrupt enemy ballistic and cruise-missile operations through offensive strikes. Additionally, a responsive maritime security force would operate with the Coast Guard deepwater “national fleet” to prevent the movement of hostile elements and weapons of mass destruction by sea. A Navy configured to support this mission would include a number of small yet capable surface ships that would complement the patrol capabilities of the Coast Guard. Unmanned air vehicles also hold great promise for cost-effective surveillance of maritime corridors.

This is only a cursory look at these various options, and there is considerable work yet to be done to refine each of the concepts. Our efforts continue to be focused on bringing clarity to each issue to assist decision makers who must make the hard calls about where limited resources will be applied to generate the greatest return on the nation’s investment.

As I have noted in the past, the Naval War College has two primary missions: to educate future leaders and to define future forces. Efforts such as the Navy Vision Project are one way in which we bring the intellectual energy of our faculty, staff, and students to bear on key issues of the day. Decisions made today will shape the Navy for decades to come. We are glad to help make these decisions the best that can be made.



RODNEY P. REMPT

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President, Naval War College*

*In Memory of  
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Students and Alumni  
Who Gave Their Lives  
While Serving the Nation*

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LCDR ROBERT R. ELSETH, USNR  
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*The Pentagon, Washington, D.C.  
September 11, 2001*

*Plaque mounted on a fragment of the west façade of the Pentagon,  
dedicated at the Naval War College on 9 September 2002*

*Born in London in 1922, Dr. Howard earned bachelor's and master's degrees in modern history at Oxford before serving in the British army in World War II (Italian campaign, twice wounded, Military Cross). After the war he taught at King's College, University of London, becoming the institution's first lecturer in war studies, then professor in war studies, and founding the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). In 1968 he became a senior research fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, then Chichele Professor of the History of War, earning a D.Litt. from Oxford in 1977. From 1980 to 1989 he was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and from 1989 to 1993 he held the Robert A. Lovett chair of Military and Naval History at Yale University. He is today president emeritus of IISS, a fellow of the British Academy, and a foreign corresponding member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Of his many publications, his most recent books are *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* (2002) and *The Lessons of History* (1991); other especially well known books are *Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France 1870–1871* (1961, 2d rev. ed. 2001), *The Causes of Wars* (1983), and the now-standard English translation (with Peter Paret) of Clausewitz's *On War* (1976). The present article is adapted from a Raymond A. Spruance Lecture delivered at the Naval War College on 17 April 2002.*

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## "9/11" AND AFTER

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### A British View

*Sir Michael Howard*

**I**t may seem rather unnecessary to call any assertion by an Englishman "a British view." The views that I am going to express are probably shared by many Americans, continental Europeans, and Russians, to say nothing of Chinese, Indians, Brazilians, and the rest of the human race. I also suspect that quite a large number of my fellow countrymen may not share them—mine is certainly not *the* British view. But my views have inevitably been shaped, and probably prejudiced, by my national background and personal experience.

The British experience of terrorism on our own soil—mainly, though not entirely, at the hands of the Irish—goes back for well over a hundred years. I myself lived for two decades in London when it was a target of terrorist attacks. The loss of life was mercifully light, but those attacks did kill people, caused untold damage to property, and inflicted immense inconvenience to millions of London commuters. To take only one small but telling example: even today you will not find, in any main-line railway station, either a trash can or a left-luggage locker. They are far too convenient for the placement of Irish Republican Army bombs. In Belfast, of course, the situation was far worse. Many more people were killed, and much property was destroyed. There were times, I admit, seeing collectors for NORaid (the Irish Northern Aid Committee) rattling their boxes in the bars of Boston, when some of us thought that the United States might do just a little more to help us with our own war against terrorism. I make this point not just to have a dig at the Yanks (though this never does any harm) but to remind them that terrorism, in one form or another, has been going on for quite a long time and that the ethics involved are not always straightforward.

But the IRA attacks, of course, were pinpricks compared to the atrocities of 11 September 2001. This was an escalation of terrorist activity as great, and as



threatening to mankind, as was the explosion of the first nuclear weapon in comparison to the “conventional” campaigns that had preceded it. We understood very well that “9/11” posed a threat to ourselves, not just to the United States. By “ourselves” I mean not simply the British or even “the West” but every country—irrespective of location, race, or creed—that was attempting to create or maintain civil societies based on democratic consensus, human rights, and the rule of law—all the principles for which we had fought two terrible world wars. The attack on the Pentagon in Washington may have been aimed specifically at the United States, but those on the World Trade Center in New York, a supranational institution housing a multinational population in the greatest polyglot city in the world, was directed against the nerve centre of an international community of which the United States is certainly the heart but that embraces the whole developed world. That was why the whole of that world—in fact, the whole world, with the exception only of a few predictable rogue states—immediately declared its support to the United States in its hour of need.

That is why I must admit to a twinge of annoyance whenever I hear the phrase “America’s War against Terror.” It is not just “America’s War.” We are all in it. Of course, Americans were the major victims, or at least have been up till now. Of course, the Americans are able, with their immense military resources, to make the major contribution in any military campaign that has to be fought. But American citizens were not the only people who suffered on 11 September. The United States is not the only nation with troops in Afghanistan—and if there are not larger contributions from allies, it is because the U.S. high command made it clear from the very beginning, for understandable reasons, that it did not want them.

In any case, armed forces are not the only, or perhaps even the most important, instruments in dealing with terrorism. Intelligence services, police forces, immigration officials, financial managers, diplomats, even theologians, can play, and indeed are playing, an equally important role in the struggle. So to call it “America’s War,” and even more to wage it as if it were just “America’s War,” is to miss its full significance. It is a profound and global confrontation between, on the one hand, those who believe in all the civilized and civilizing values inherited from the Enlightenment, and on the other those who detest those values and fear them as a threat to their own core beliefs and traditional ways of life. In this confrontation armed force must inevitably play a part, but the struggle can never be won by armed forces alone—not even those of the United States.

So is “war” the right word to describe the conflict? I do not think that it is pedantic to ask this question. Journalists and politicians may have to reduce complex issues to headlines or sound bites; professional students of war and of international relations have to be more precise. The word “war” is dangerously

misleading. It suggests a conflict waged against a clearly defined political adversary by armed forces to whose activities everything else is subsidiary; more important, it connotes a conflict that can end in a clear victory. This mind-set is revealed whenever the press speculates about “the next phase” in “the war against terror.” For the media it is a conflict conducted in a series of military campaigns. After Afghanistan, where? Iraq? Somalia? Yemen?

But in fact there need be no “next phase.” The campaign is being waged the whole time, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, all over the world. So long

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*Dystopian scenarios of a kind hitherto confined to Hollywood have now become real possibilities, if not yet probabilities.*

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as there are no further outrages, we can be said to be winning it—winning through international police work, diplomacy, financial pressure, and propa-

ganda. Whether another military campaign will be needed remains an open question. If we play our cards properly, we may succeed in rooting out al-Qa’ida and its associates without any further military action at all.

Still, it is perhaps inevitable that the word “war” should be used as an analogy, in the same way that we speak of a war against disease, or against drugs, or against crime—the mobilisation of all national resources to deal with a great social evil. But these are campaigns that cannot be “won” in any military sense. Crime and disease as such cannot be “defeated.” We have to live with them. They can, however, be reduced to acceptable levels. It is the same with terrorism. Terrorism is a strategy, a means of making war, the classic instrument of the weak against the strong. It is used by desperate and ruthless people who are determined to bring down apparently immovable forces of authority by any methods that lie to hand. It was used long before al-Qa’ida was ever thought of, and it will continue to be used long after al-Qa’ida has been forgotten. But if we are to deal with terrorism effectively, we need to know precisely who our adversaries are, how they are motivated, and where they come from.

First, even if a “war” against “terrorism” in general can no more be “won” than a war against disease, particular diseases can nonetheless be controlled or even eliminated. So can particular terrorist groups. Today we are dealing with an exceptionally dangerous network of transnational conspirators using all the traditional instruments of terrorism. They strike at soft targets. Their object is to gain publicity for their cause, to demoralise and discredit established authorities, and to gain popular support by provoking them into overreaction. Governments should regard them as criminals—criminals of a particularly dangerous kind. The appropriate instruments for dealing with them will be intelligence services and police, backed where necessary by special warfare units. The use of regular armed forces should be seen as a last resort, especially if one is dealing

with urban terrorists. It is one thing to conduct a campaign in the sparsely inhabited mountains of Afghanistan or the jungles of Malaya. It is quite another to do so in the streets of a modern city, whether Londonderry or Jenin. In such an environment, armies, however hard they may try to exercise restraint, are bound to cause collateral damage that plays into the hands of terrorist propaganda. In plain English, a great many innocent people—small children, pregnant women, the elderly, the helpless—will be killed. The British learned all about this in Northern Ireland. The Israeli defence forces are experiencing this in dealing with Palestinian terrorists today. Such a campaign gives the terrorists exactly the kind of publicity, and belligerent status, that they need.

If terrorists can provoke the government to using regular armed forces against them, they have already taken a very important trick. They have been promoted to the status of “freedom fighters,” a “liberation army,” and may win popular support from sympathisers all over the world. Even if they are defeated, their glorious memory will inspire their successors. Pictures of Che Guevara adorned the walls of student dormitories for a generation, and I am afraid that images of Osama bin Laden will occupy the same place of honour in Islamic equivalents for quite as long.

Nonetheless, there are times when one cannot avoid the use of military force. It has to be used when the terrorists are able to operate on too large a scale to be dealt with by normal policing methods, as was the case in Ireland and is now in Israel. It has to be used when enemies establish themselves in territory that is virtually “no-man’s-land.” Finally, it has to be used when they enjoy the protection of another sovereign state.

For the flushing of terrorists or their equivalents out of no-man’s-land we have plenty of historical precedent. The Caribbean was a nest of pirates until cleaned up in the eighteenth century. The coasts of the Mediterranean were terrorised by Barbary pirates until the U.S. Marine Corps landed on the shores of Tripoli. Today “failed states” like Yemen and Somalia cannot prevent their territory being used as terrorist bases, and armed force must be used to flush such foes out. Even states that in other respects may be achieving limited success in establishing the rule of law, such as Colombia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, may need help in eliminating terrorist elements on their own territory. When a terrorist organization enjoys the open protection and support of another sovereign state, as was the case with al-Qa‘ida and the ruling government of Afghanistan, there is a serious *casus belli*, and a regular war may be the only way to bring the criminals to justice. (Whether it is always wise to do so is another matter. In 1914 the Austrian government took advantage of that excuse to declare war on Serbia and thereby caused a world war. Also, it is not at all obvious that the best way of

dealing with IRA supporters in the United States would have been for the British to burn down the White House again.)

The struggle against a global terrorist network, then, though it may be misleading to call it a war, may involve specific wars. When it does involve such a war, if we are to retain our self-respect and the regard of the international community as a whole, we should conduct it in accordance with the obligations and constraints that the civilized world has developed for armed conflicts over the past three hundred years. The war should not be undertaken unless legitimized by general international support. In conducting it, care should be taken to avoid collateral damage. Enemy forces should be given the protection of the Geneva Conventions that we expect for our own. The status of members of terrorist organizations that do not belong to the armed forces of the enemy should be defined, and individuals suspected of criminal acts should be tried and judged accordingly. Not least important, we should have a clear vision of the long-term objective of the war; victory in the field must be converted into a stable peace. War, in short, is a serious matter, not just a manhunt on a rather larger scale.

That is why there was so much hesitation in the international community as a whole, not least in the United Kingdom, when the president of the United States linked the campaign against the terrorist network responsible for the atrocities of 11 September with a broader “axis of evil,”\* consisting primarily of countries hostile to the United States that are developing “weapons of mass destruction”—Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. These are all very different cases, and each of them needs to be considered on its merits. There is some evidence linking Saddam Hussein with al-Qa‘ida, but no more than points to Libya, or Syria, or even Saudi Arabia. The real charge against Saddam is that he is continuing to develop weapons of mass destruction in defiance of United Nations prohibition, and he should certainly be stopped—but that is rather a different matter. In the case of Iran there is a stronger connection with al-Qa‘ida, which enjoys the open support of the mullahs; however, in that country modernising and Western-leaning elements have made huge headway since the days of the Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, and to condemn their entire nation as “evil” does little to help them. As for North Korea, though it is a very rogue state indeed, linking it with the Islamic fundamentalism that inspired the perpetrators of “9/11” has caused general bewilderment.

Certainly, all three are problem states that pose dangers to global stability, but opinions quite justifiably differ as to how urgent are the threats they respectively

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\* State of the Union address, Washington, D.C., 29 January 2002.

pose and how they can best be dealt with. Their connection with the “9/11” atrocity is at best remote, and “regime changes” in them could not prevent a new such outrage. There is a real danger that in enlarging the objective of its campaign from a war against a specific terrorist organization to a general and almost indefinable “War against Terror,” the United States is not only losing the support of many of its friends and necessary allies but becoming distracted from the real long-term threat that emerged in Manhattan, the Pentagon, and rural Pennsylvania on 11 September. That horrific event was like the sudden eruption of a flame from a fire that had long been smouldering underground. It will continue to smoulder whatever happens to Saddam Hussein.

Although terrorism, like war itself, is probably as old as mankind, there are two particularly alarming features of the present situation. The first is the new vulnerability to terrorist attack of our fragile and interdependent societies. The destruction of the twin towers and the gouging of the Pentagon were horrific and spectacular, but the actual damage caused was finite. The massacre of some three thousand people was horrific and spectacular enough, but if nuclear or chemical weapons had been used the death toll would have been at least ten times as great. The disruption of world trade was traumatic, but it was temporary and minimal; skilful infestation of global computer networks could have magnified and

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*In the confrontation against terrorism, armed force must inevitably play a part, but the struggle can never be won by armed forces alone—not even those of the United States.*

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prolonged that disruption indefinitely. The terrorist attacks of 11 September constituted a single if terrible act; a linked series of such catastrophes could have caused widespread panic, eco-

nomic crisis, and political turbulence on a scale that could make democratic government almost impossible.

Dystopian scenarios of a kind hitherto confined to Hollywood have now become real possibilities, if not yet probabilities. They could all be caused, like the destruction of the twin towers, by conspiratorial networks that need no state sponsorship to provide them with weapons, expertise, finance, or motivation. These “nonstate actors” (to use political-science jargon) are nourished and supported by the very societies they are attempting to destroy. Their members have been educated in Western universities, trained in Western laboratories and flying schools, and financed, however unwittingly, by global consortiums. They are not tools of Saddam Hussein or anyone else. We have bred and educated them ourselves. One can buy box-cutters and airway schedules nearer home than Baghdad, Tehran, or Pyongyang.

The second feature of this breed of terrorists is even more disquieting—their motivation. Normally, terrorism has been a method used to achieve a specific political objective. In nineteenth-century Russia, where the technique was invented, the goal was the overthrow of the tsarist regime. In the Ireland of Sinn Féin it was liberation from British rule. In British-ruled Palestine in the 1940s, the terrorist tactics of Irgun and the Stern Gang were highly effective in securing the establishment of a Jewish state. Once their objective is achieved, such terrorists—now transformed into “freedom fighters”—are welcomed into the community of nations and their leaders become respected heads of state, chatting affably with American presidents on the lawn of the White House. The terrorist activities of contemporary Islamic fundamentalists are certainly linked to one particular political struggle—what they see as the attempt of the Palestinians to achieve independent statehood and recognition, which is a struggle that, in spite of the methods they use, enjoys a wide measure of support throughout the Islamic world. But even if that attempt were successful and President Arafat were once again received in the White House, this time as head of a fully fledged Palestinian state, the campaign of the fundamentalists would not come to an end. The roots of the campaign go far deeper, and the objectives of the terrorists are far more ambitious. The fundamentalist campaign is rooted in a visceral hatred and contempt for Western civilization as such and resentment at its global ascendancy. The object of the extremists is to destroy it altogether.

Here this analysis becomes influenced not so much by a British as a European background—or rather, by European history. This teaches that there is nothing new about such hatred and that it is not peculiar to Islam. It originated in Europe two centuries ago in reaction to the whole process of what is loosely known as the Enlightenment. It was a protest against the erosion of traditional values and authorities by the rationalism, the secularism, and the freethinking that both underlay and were empowered by the American and French Revolutions. It gained further strength in the nineteenth century as industrialisation and modernisation transformed European society, creating general disorientation and alienation that was to be exploited by extreme forces on both the Left and the Right. By the beginning of the twentieth century it was reinforced by mounting alarm at the development of a global economy that, in spite of the growth of democracy, seemed to place the destinies of millions in the hands of impersonal and irresponsible forces beyond the control of national governments. It was, in short, a cry of rage against the whole seemingly irresistible process that has resulted from the dissolution of traditional constraints on thought and enterprise and the release of the dynamic forces of industrial development collectively known as “capitalism.” It was to provide the driving force behind both fascism



and communism, and it was to be one of the underlying causes of the Second, if not indeed the First, World War.

The experience of Europe in the nineteenth century was to be repeated in the twentieth and continues today throughout what is still, for want of a better label, described as the “third world.” There also industrialisation has led to urbanisation, with the resulting breakdown of traditional authority and the destruction of cultures rooted in tribal rule and land tenure. There also medical advances, by reducing the death rate, have led to unprecedented increases in the population. There also a surplus population has fled from the countryside to overcrowded cities, and from the cities to, where possible, overseas. But there the similarity ends. In the nineteenth century there was a New World prepared to accept immigrants on an unlimited scale. Today there is not. The third world has to absorb its own surplus population, as best it can.

In nineteenth-century Europe the immiseration of the Industrial Revolution was certainly eased by emigration, but it was eventually conquered by the very economic development that had originally caused it. Market economies overcame their teething troubles and converted their hungry masses into consumers

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*I must admit to a twinge of annoyance whenever I hear the phrase “America’s War against Terror.” It is not just “America’s War.” We are all in it.*

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with money in their pockets. State activities expanded to curb the excesses of the market and to care for its casualties. Today the general assumption in the West is that the problems of the third

world, with the help of Western capital and technology, will ultimately be solved by the same process—the creation of thriving national economies that will absorb surplus labour and transform the unemployed masses into prosperous consumers, within a stable infrastructure provided by an efficient and uncorrupt state.

The trouble is that this very goal—that of a prosperous materialist society with religion as an optional extra—appalls Islamic fundamentalists, as well as many Muslims who are not fundamentalists. They regard Western society not as a model to be imitated but as an awful warning, a Sodom and Gomorrah, an example of how mankind should *not* live. Instead they embrace a heroic anti-culture, one that has much in common with the European ideologues who protested against the decadence of Western materialism and preached redemption of mankind through war; they hold it, however, with a fanaticism possible only to those who believe that they will receive their reward in an afterlife. Like fascism and communism, their creed appeals to the idealistic young, especially those who feel rejected by the society around them, as do all too many immigrants in the cities of Europe. Like fascism and communism, it attracts all who

are disillusioned with the promises of liberal capitalism or are suffering from its defects.

It is only natural that this appeal should be most effective among peoples for whom the world of Western capitalism is not only profoundly alien and offensive in itself—with its godlessness, its shamelessness, its materialism, and its blatant vulgarity—but worse, seems to be winning, bulldozing away the world of their ancestors and the values that held their societies together for aeons. For them the enemy is not just Western capitalism as such but its powerhouse, the United States, the Great Satan. More specifically, it is those elements within Islamic societies that appear to be cooperating with it.

Nevertheless—and this cannot be too often or too strongly stressed—there is as little sympathy in the Islamic world for the methods and objectives of the terrorists as there is in the West. Whatever their self-appointed spokesmen may say, the rising expectations of the Islamic peoples are almost certainly focused on achieving the kind of material well-being that the West ultimately promises (and the terrorists reject), so long as that goal remains compatible with their core cultural beliefs. Al-Qa'ida and its associates are exactly the kind of puritanical iconoclasts who emerge in all revolutionary situations and try to remould humanity to fit their own ideal worlds. In unstable societies the ruthlessness and fanaticism of such people bring them to the fore and enable them, however briefly, to seize power and do an untold amount of harm.

So the global reach of contemporary terrorists should not blind us to the fact that their strength derives from the general instability of contemporary Islamic societies and that therefore the problem, ultimately, is one for Islam itself. If there is indeed “a war against terrorism,” it has to be fought and won within the Islamic world. The role of the West must be to support and encourage those who are fighting that war, and we must take care that we do nothing to make their task more difficult.

This will not be easy. How can we support our friends in the Islamic world, those who are seeking their own path to modernisation, without making them look like Western stooges, betraying their own cultures? How should we treat their leaders who are as hostile to—and as threatened by—Islamic fundamentalism as we are but who use what we regard as unacceptable methods to suppress it? How can we avoid being associated with the wealthy elements in Islamic countries that are most resistant to the social changes that alone can make possible the spread and acceptance of Western ideas?

These are all problems for the long run. What about the short?

There are two paradigms for dealing with “international terrorism,” both equally misleading. One is the liberal ideal, held by well-meaning Europeans and

perhaps a good many well-meaning Americans as well. According to this, international terrorists should be dealt with by police action under the auspices of the United Nations. Any military action should be conducted by UN forces, and suspected terrorists should be brought to trial before an international court. The other is rather more popular in the United States—"America's War," a private fight conducted by the armed forces of the United States against almost cosmic forces of evil. In this conflict no holds are barred; America must do "whatever it takes" to destroy those forces. The support of the outside world is welcomed, indeed expected—as President Bush put it, "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists"\*—but the war will be waged and won by Americans without any interference by well-intentioned but wimpish allies, condemnation by woolly-minded do-gooders, or constraints imposed by outmoded concepts of international law.

The first of these paradigms, the liberal ideal, may be desirable, but is quite unrealistic. Apart from anything else, in their present mood the American people are simply not prepared to subject themselves to any international authority or to hand over the perpetrators of the "9/11" massacre to any foreign jurisdiction. In any case, the record shows that "the international community" as such is quite unable to organize any serious military intervention unless the United States not only supports it but plays a leading role. Whether the other nations involved like it or not, the campaign against international terrorism must be conducted on terms acceptable to, though not necessarily dictated by, the United States, and in waging it American resources will be indispensable.

The other view, "America's War," may be realistic, but it is both undesirable and likely to be counterproductive. By nationalising the war in this manner, there is a real danger that the United States will antagonise the entire Moslem world, lose the support of its natural allies in the West, and play into the hands of its former opponents, at present quiescent but by no means eliminated, in Russia and the People's Republic of China. This would be a profound tragedy. In 1945 the United States was able to convert a wartime alliance into a framework for world governance capable of embracing its former enemies and surviving the tensions and trials of the Cold War. In 1990 its rapid liquidation of the Cold War and generosity to its former adversaries held out genuine promise of a New World Order. The impact of "9/11" seemed to provide just such another catalytic moment. America's traditional rivals and adversaries fell over one another in offering support, which was eagerly accepted. It looked as if a genuine world community was being forged, one of entirely new range and strength. Out of the evil

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\* "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People," U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., 20 September 2001.

done on 11 September, it seemed, unprecedented good might come. It still might, and it still should.

But it will only come if the United States abandons its unilateral approach to the handling of international terrorism and recognises that the problem can effectively be dealt with only by the international community that America has done so much to create—a community embracing the bulk of the Islamic world—and that still needs American leadership if it is to function effectively.

There is considerable risk that otherwise, however effective America's armed forces may prove in the field and however many "regime changes" they may precipitate, the United States may end up not only alienating its traditional allies but indefinitely facing a sullen and hostile Islamic world where terrorists continue to breed prolifically and the supporters of the West live in a state of permanent siege. It would be a world in which, to my own perhaps parochial perspective, countries like Britain with large Islamic minorities will live under a perpetual shadow of race war. Is it too much to hope that I shall live to see a world where it is safe to have trash cans in our railway stations?



## SOCIOECONOMIC ROOTS OF MIDDLE EAST RADICALISM

Alan Richards

On 11 September 2001 the United States was attacked by utopian fanatics, followers of a movement inspired by an exceptionally narrow interpretation of Islam. Although millions of Muslims deplored the attacks, millions of others also expressed some degree of sympathy for the terrorists. Why do this movement and other radical Islamic political movements resonate in the Middle

East and the wider Muslim world? The answer, of course, is profoundly complex. Social, economic, political, and cultural factors, interacting over many decades, have spawned this particular phenomenon. Space here permits only a sketch of the social, economic, and political issues.

To seek to understand why these murderous acts took place in no way condones them. Historians who study Nazism do not justify Auschwitz, and students of Stalinism do not exonerate the perpetrators of the Gulag. Understanding why something happens is much better than incomprehension. If we fail to grasp the reasons for the attacks on the United States, we will fail to respond wisely.

### A REGION IN CRISIS

Muslims worldwide confront a multidimensional crisis. Like any important historical phenomenon, its roots are profoundly complex and intertwined, composed of economic, social, political, and cultural

*Alan Richards is a professor of economics and environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He was educated in political science, Middle Eastern studies, and economics at Harvard University and the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Between 1992 and 1994 Professor Richards worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development as a senior political economist, conducting or directing political economy analyses. He has taught economics at the University of Wisconsin, Harvard University, and the American University in Cairo. With John Waterbury he coauthored A Political Economy of the Middle East (2d ed., 1996). He was a MacArthur Fellow in International Environmental Policy for the University of California. He is an advisory editor of Middle East Policy and a frequent consultant to the U.S. government on Middle Eastern affairs.*

*This paper draws on two previous papers, "The Political Economy of Economic Reform in the Middle East" (RAND, Santa Monica, Calif., October 2001) and "At War with Utopian Fanatics" (Middle East Policy, December 2001). The author is indebted to Isebill Gruhn, Paul Lubeck, and Steven Simon for helpful discussions. They are, of course, not responsible for the arguments advanced here.*

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dimensions. However important the socioeconomic and political aspects of this crisis, the cultural difficulties are equally, perhaps uniquely, important. While these dimensions are conceptually distinct, they are also intimately linked, and they interact in complex ways. For example, economic failure erodes regimes' legitimacy and fosters an ideological vacuum, as old ideologies (e.g., Arab nationalism) are perceived as failures. The often-noted fact that essentially all serious political discourse in the region is now phrased in Islamic terms links the cultural dimension to all the others.

This crisis is simultaneously internal and external. It is internal because of population growth, failed economic policies, local authoritarianism, and cultural issues. It is external because wider forces of globalization play a critical role in stimulating the growth and spread of radicalism. Much of the region's economic stagnation derives from its weak and distorted integration into the global economy. At the same time, the kinds of integration that have occurred—specifically, international migration and the spread of global communications—have themselves contributed to the spread of radicalism. Also, in large part, the failure of local regimes stems from a failure to manage and engage successfully the wider process of globalization.<sup>1</sup>

Today's Middle East finds itself mired in the "modernization process." The transition from a society of illiterate farmers, ruled by a literate, urban elite, into an urban, mass-educated society with an economy based on industry and services has been deeply traumatic. Worse, such change has always and everywhere spawned grotesque violence. The modern history of both Europe and East Asia, the only places in the world where this transition has been more or less successfully accomplished, often reads like a horror novel: World Wars I and II, Stalin's Gulag, Hitler's Holocaust, Japanese fascism, the Chinese revolution, the "Great Leap Forward" and its attendant famine, and the Cultural Revolution. The American experience has also been bloody: the extermination of Native Americans, the racial violence of slavery and Jim Crow, and the more than half-million casualties of its own Civil War. Why should we expect the people of the Middle East to do better than anyone else?

Much of the violence during this transition has been perpetrated by utopian fanatics, a category that includes fascists, Nazis, Leninists, and Maoists, and the followers of al-Qa'ida. Like their predecessors, today's Islamic fanatics "imagine a future" in the "restoration" of the (imagined) conditions of seventh-century Arabia. Like all fanatics, they believe that they enjoy a monopoly on truth and that those who disagree "are not merely mistaken, but wicked or mad."<sup>2</sup> They believe that there is only one goal for humanity, and to reach it they are ready to wade "through an ocean of blood to the Kingdom of Love."<sup>3</sup> Fanatics have always built towers of skulls as monuments to their fantasies.



These particularly virulent fanatics are part of a larger social phenomenon, the transnational “Salafi movement.” This movement advocates a return to what its proponents believe to be the strict practices of the earliest Muslims. Their political ideology asserts that such a return will solve the many difficult problems facing most Muslim societies. Their slogan declares, “*Islam huwwa al-hal*”—“Islam [the Salafi interpretation of Islam] is the solution.” Salafis include the followers of al-Qa‘ida and the *muwahhidiin* (or “Unitarians,” as they call themselves, or the Wahhabis, as others call them), partisans of the official ideology of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Several analysts have recently called attention to the spectrum of opinions within this movement.<sup>4</sup>

Radical movements have their greatest appeal when the dislocations of the transition to modernity are most acute. Only the slaughter of World War I and its chaotic aftermath allowed the Bolsheviks to seize power in Russia. It is inconceivable that Hitler would have come to power without the Treaty of Versailles and the Great Depression. Famine, governmental collapse, and the horrors of the Japanese invasion set the stage for China and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. The siren song of fanatics becomes most seductive when economic, political, social, and cultural crises combine and when people feel that they have been repeatedly humiliated.

### THE RAGE OF THE YOUNG

The utopian fanaticism of al-Qa‘ida and other groups is nourished by the deep despair of huge numbers of young Middle Easterners, half of whom are younger than twenty. The first major social element in the noxious cocktail of religious radicalism in the region is the phenomenon of the “youth bulge.”

The key demographic facts of the region are that the population is still growing rapidly but that fertility rates have declined considerably during the past decade. According to the World Bank, the population of the Middle East and North Africa is now growing at about 2.1 percent per year. At this rate, the population will double in about thirty-four years. On the other hand, population growth rates have fallen sharply in the past ten years, from 3.2 percent in the mid-1980s to 2.7 percent between 1990 and 1995. Sharp fertility declines caused this change, and there is reason to expect further declines.

However, this generalization hides substantial variations across countries and regions (table 1). Although population growth rates and total fertility rates have fallen markedly in Egypt, Iran, and Tunisia, they have remained stubbornly high in Gaza and Yemen. Indeed, the total fertility rates in Gaza (7.6 percent) and Yemen (7.1 percent) are among the highest in the world. Gaza also has a very high rate in relation to per capita income, a phenomenon also observable in the Arab Gulf countries.

**TABLE 1**  
**POPULATION DATA FOR SELECTED MIDDLE EASTERN**  
**AND OTHER MUSLIM COUNTRIES**

Country	Population (millions, 2000)	Population Growth Rate <sup>a</sup> (percent)	TFR <sup>b</sup>
Afghanistan	26.8	2.5	6.0
Algeria	31.8	2.2	3.4
Bahrain	0.64	1.9	3.0
Egypt	68.5	1.9	3.4
Gaza	1.2	4.5	7.6
Iran	71.9	2.5	4.3
Iraq	24.7	3.6	6.1
Jordan	4.7	3.1	4.8
Kuwait	2.1	1.9	3.4
Lebanon	3.6	1.6	2.3
Libya	6.1	3.7	6.2
Morocco	30.2	2.0	3.4
Oman	2.5	3.3	6.1
Pakistan	141.2	2.4	4.9
Qatar	0.75	1.3	3.5
Saudi Arabia	22.2	3.3	6.4
Somalia	7.0	2.8	7.0
Sudan	33.5	2.9	5.7
Syria	17.8	3.2	5.6
Tunisia	9.6	1.5	2.4
Turkey	66.6	1.6	2.5
United Arab Emirates	2.4	1.6	3.6
West Bank	1.7	3.2	4.9
Yemen	17.5	3.3	7.1

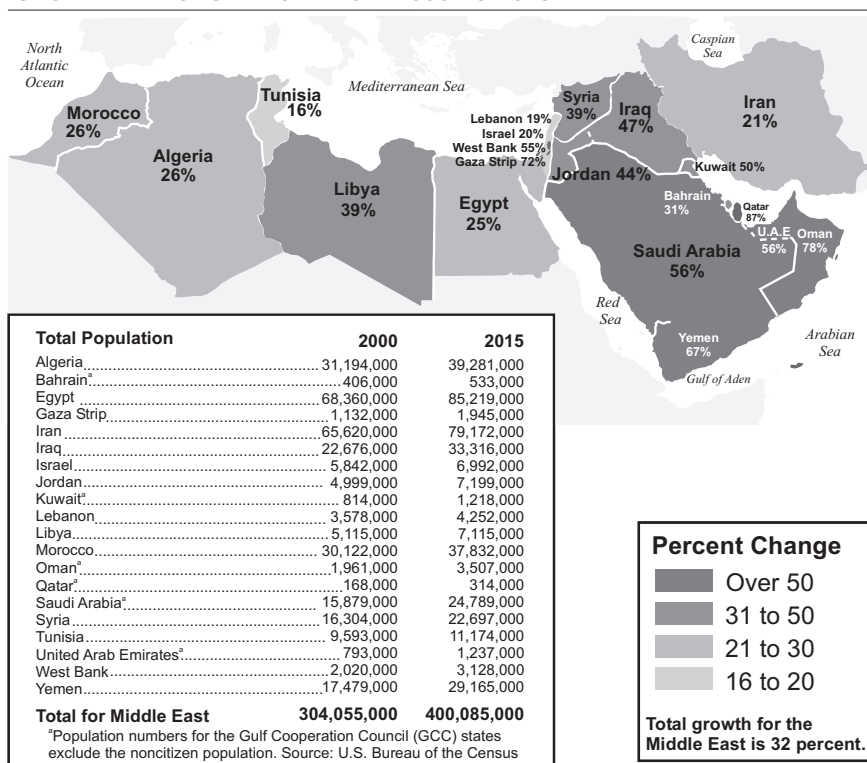
a. Rate of natural increase, 2000.

b. Total fertility rate, 2000. The TFR measures the number of children that a “statistically average” woman will have during her lifetime.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, available at <http://www.census.gov/ipc/prod/wp98/wp98.pdf>

Populations will continue to grow despite falling fertility rates because fertility remains well above replacement levels and because, as a result of past population growth, many women will soon enter childbearing years (“demographic momentum”). Many countries in the region will experience a considerable rise in their population during the next fifteen years (figure 1). The population may reach roughly six hundred million by 2025, some six times greater than the 1950s. Such growth poses numerous economic challenges, from food and water to jobs and housing.

**FIGURE 1**  
**GROWTH IN POPULATION FROM 2000 TO 2015**



Several implications follow from this demographic pattern. First, and most important, is that the majority of those in the Middle East are young—half the Arab population, 54 percent of Iranians, and 52 percent of Pakistanis are younger than twenty years old (table 2). (By contrast, only slightly more than one-quarter of the populations of developed countries—the United States, European Union, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan—are under twenty.) Two-thirds of the people in the region are under thirty. It is not likely that this picture will change markedly in the next generation. By 2025 the number of people aged fourteen or younger will roughly double; in that year, about two out

**TABLE 2**  
**YOUTH AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATIONS**

Percentage of Population That Is:		
Country	Under 15 years old	Under 20 years old
Afghanistan	43	53
Algeria	38	50
Bahrain	31	38
Egypt	36	47
Gaza	52	62
Iran	43	54
Iraq	47	58
Jordan	43	54
Kuwait	32	42
Lebanon	30	41
Libya	48	58
Morocco	36	47
Oman	41	51
Pakistan	34	52
Qatar	27	35
Saudi Arabia	43	52
Somalia	44	54
Sudan	45	56
Syria	46	57
Tunisia	32	42
Turkey	31	41
United Arab Emirates	32	41
West Bank	45	56
Yemen	48	60
DCs <sup>a</sup>	19	26
LDCs <sup>b</sup>	34	43

a. Developed countries—European Union, Japan, United States, Canada, Australia/  
 New Zealand.

b. Less developed countries.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, available at <http://www.census.gov/ipc/prod/wp98/wp98.pdf>

of five Near Easterners are projected to be younger than twenty.<sup>5</sup> When one asks such questions as “What is the impact of our policies on Arabs?” we are in fact asking, “What is the impact of our policies on young people?”

Second, the rapid fall in fertility may lead to a rapid decrease in the “dependency ratio” (the number of people under fifteen or over sixty-five compared to the working-age population).<sup>6</sup> When this has happened elsewhere, as in East Asia in the 1970s and 1980s, dramatic increases in national savings rates have ensued. Perhaps the demographic change caused the savings change. However, whether or not such savings find their way into productive and job-creating investment depends on many other factors as well. Nevertheless, in the sea of “bad news” about the region’s political economy, it is well to be reminded that not all is bleak.

For the first time in history, many of these youths have received some amount of education. Although the region lags behind other parts of the developing world, school enrollment and literacy have risen dramatically during the past generation. Today most Arabs and Iranians can read and write; this is not yet the case in Pakistan, where only two-fifths of adults are literate.

There is considerable variation in education among countries. More than three-quarters of the adults in Iran and Kuwait are literate, while there is between one-half to two-thirds adult literacy in Algeria, Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Only about half or fewer of the adults are literate in Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Yemen. But even in Egypt, a laggard in this respect, virtually all children attend school. School enrollment has exploded throughout the region, though the pattern has been uneven and there is still a huge gap between girls and boys. Most boys were in school long before their sisters. In Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, and Tunisia, nearly all children attend primary school, and roughly 60 percent of all adolescents are enrolled in secondary school. In Saudi Arabia, all boys are enrolled in primary school, but only 75 percent of girls are in school. In the least developed countries, most girls do not attend school. In Sudan and Yemen, for example, nearly all boys are enrolled in primary school, whereas only 40 percent of girls attend. In Morocco over one-third, and in Oman roughly one-fourth, of girls are not in primary school. Despite the appalling waste of human resources such undereducating of women represents, the past generation has seen an educational revolution throughout the entire region.

Certain points should be noted. First, the gap in education between girls and boys may be a factor in the current popularity of radical Islam.<sup>7</sup> A rather hopeful view argues that Islamic radicalism’s relentless focus on rigid gender segregation is something that only the current generation will experience. In the past,

neither men nor women were educated; in the future (and the future is now, in Iran), everyone will be at least marginally educated.

Second, rapidly spreading education is part of the social background of what has been called the “crisis of authority” in Islam.<sup>8</sup> How is it that any engineer can issue his own *fatwa* when in previous centuries such pronouncements were the exclusive prerogative of a small, relatively privileged elite of traditionally educated Islamic scholars (the *’ulama*)? The widespread diffusion of education, in conjunction with the absence of hierarchical controls on religious edicts in Islam (in contrast to, say, Roman Catholicism), is creating a “religious anarchy” that provides the cultural space in which radicals can promulgate and advocate their messages.

Third, the quality of education leaves much to be desired. Education in the region stresses rote memorization, with little emphasis on analytical thinking and problem solving. Expectations have been raised, but the skills needed to meet those expectations have not been imparted. Millions of young men now have enough education to make the old, dirty jobs unsatisfying but have not acquired the skills needed to perform successfully in the modern, hypercompetitive, global economy.

Fourth, thanks to past birth rates, the Middle East has the most rapidly growing labor force in the world; between 1990 and 1998 it grew at 3.4 percent per year. Algeria’s labor force is growing at 4.9 percent a year, Syria’s at 4.8 percent, and Yemen’s at 5.6 percent. Compare this to the labor force growth in the European Union of 0.4 percent per year during the past decade, and the American labor force at about 0.8 percent. In other words, the labor force in the Middle East is growing four times faster than the American labor force and eight times faster than the European Union’s. Although the rate of growth attributable to past population growth will decelerate in some countries, such as Tunisia, during the next ten to fifteen years, declines in fertility are always accompanied (plausibly, largely caused) by an increase in female education, which enables women to enter the labor market. It is highly unlikely that the growth of the supply of labor will decelerate within the medium term.

At the same time, the demand for labor has grown sluggishly. Simple economics tells us that given such a mismatch between the growth of demand and of supply, either wages will fall, unemployment will rise, or (most likely) some combination of both will occur, the precise mix varying with specific labor market structures. Government policies have not only reduced the rate of growth of demand for labor but also fostered inflexible labor markets. Decades of government job guarantees for graduates have induced students to seek any degree, regardless of its contribution to productivity. Governments cannot now provide the necessary jobs, and statist policies impede private-sector job creation.

Current levels of unemployment are high (table 3) and will probably worsen. In some countries the level of unemployment has been similar to that in the United States during the worst days of the Great Depression. Real wages have stagnated for nearly a generation, and poverty levels have either remained about the same or increased during the past decade. Unemployment and low wages

**TABLE 3**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST:**  
**A COMPENDIUM OF ESTIMATES**

Country	Unemployment Rate (percentage)	Remarks
Algeria	30	1999
Egypt	12 <sup>a</sup>	2000
Iran	20–25	2001
Jordan	15	Official rate. CIA gives 25–30 (1999)
Lebanon	18	1998
Libya	29	2000
Morocco	15–22	2000
Saudi Arabia	14–18	Higher among graduates
Syria	12–15	1999
Tunisia	16	1999
Yemen	35	1999

a. Some estimates show 20.

Source: for Saudi Arabia, U.S. Embassy, Riyadh, *New York Times*, 26 August 2001; for Iran, Eric Rouleau, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, [www.en.monde-diplomatique.fr/2001/06/05iran](http://www.en.monde-diplomatique.fr/2001/06/05iran); for all others, MEDEA Institute (European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Co-operation), and *CIA World Factbook*.

primarily affect young, uneducated urbanites, whose anger is fuel for political unrest.

As usual, conflicting estimates of the “extent of poverty”—an inherently subjective concept—exist. One rather sanguine view is that of the World Bank, which holds that, compared with other regions of the developing world, the Middle East and North Africa collectively have “relatively limited” poverty.<sup>9</sup> The number of poor persons—defined as those with yearly incomes of less than a “purchasing power parity” figure of \$365 per year—is given at 5 percent, and the depth and severity of poverty is low. Many observers have objected to this analysis on the grounds that it set the poverty line too low relative to per capita incomes.<sup>10</sup> From a political perspective, what counts is the social definition of poverty. Poverty is inevitably partly relative. Poor people in Egypt, Jordan, or Algeria do not compare themselves with the poor in Bangladesh or Madagascar;



they feel “poor” relative to their fellow Egyptians, Jordanians, or Algerians. It follows that higher estimates of poverty are more politically relevant.

What are the political consequences of poverty? It provides a fertile recruiting ground for opponents of regimes and therefore poses a challenge to governance, in at least two ways. First, some of the poor, particularly the younger ones with limited education, join violent opposition movements. Today’s basic profile for a violent militant is a young man with some education who may also have recently moved to the city. Such young people are often unemployed or have jobs below their expectations. In North Africa they are colorfully known as the *hetistes*, “those who lean against the wall.”<sup>11</sup> Evidence from Egyptian arrest records suggests that many of those arrested for violent activities against the regime come from shantytowns surrounding large cities, usually the poorest urban areas in the country. It has been argued that the rise of Islamic radicalism in Central Asia is related to the problems of youth unemployment.<sup>12</sup>

The violent opposition toward the government in Upper Egypt during the past two decades is also related to poverty. The *Sa‘id* (Middle and Upper Egypt) is the poorest region in the country. As elsewhere in the country, poverty has been rising there in the past ten years, thanks to the collapse of unskilled wages. Whereas real wages rose over 350 percent in real terms from 1973 to 1985 (largely due to emigration for work in the Gulf states), the decrease in regional oil production and the war with Iraq led to the return of many of these economic migrants. Such forces have brought wages down by over 50 percent for unskilled workers. As *Sa‘idis* began moving into the cities, the problem of Islamic radicalism appeared in more visible locations—Egypt’s major cities.

The creation of jobs is particularly difficult since the remedy in the long run will likely worsen the problem in the short run. The demand for labor has grown slowly because output growth has lagged and because of specific policy biases against labor-intensive, job-creating growth. Statist policies not only retard growth but raise the capital intensity—and reduce the job-creating impact—of whatever growth does occur. Changing these policies would require laying off workers in state-owned enterprises and the bureaucracy, a move that frightens many government leaders.

### NOT BY BREAD ALONE

The unemployment problem is the most politically volatile economic issue facing the Middle East. It encourages many relatively educated, young, urban residents to support radical Islamic political movements. Yet we must be cautious here, for the “youth bulge” and rampant unemployment are at least as severe in sub-Saharan Africa, but we hear little of Congolese international terrorism. There are many complex cultural forces behind Islamic movements; no

economic determinism is implied here. To understand how and why discontent spawned by unemployment takes a specific political and ideological form, we cannot rely alone on demography and economics. We must also look at political structures and ideological environments.

The Ayatollah Khomeini is reported to have said, "The revolution is about Islam, not the price of melons." Deeper issues of identity and legitimacy are at stake. For example, it should be remembered that although unemployed, frustrated young men can turn to Islamism, they can also turn to drugs and crime, to apathy, indifference, muddling through, dogged hard work, or any number of other personal "coping" strategies. The decision to join a revolutionary movement is an idiosyncratic and deeply personal one. Socioeconomic contexts may be important for understanding these movements, but they hardly provide a complete explanation for them. Nevertheless, the huge numbers of discontented young men and women are a major threat to the internal stability of the Middle East.

Youth politics always and everywhere focuses not merely on material goods but also on questions of identity, justice, and morality. Consider, for example, the politics of the American "baby boomers" of the 1960s. Impatience and Manichean thinking are among the burdens of youth politics, whether in Berkeley or Cairo. Also, as criminologists point out, resort to violence is overwhelmingly a phenomenon of youth. The millions of unemployed and underemployed young men gathered in the specific political and cultural milieux of the region constitute one of the tangled roots of radicalism.

### THE JUNGLE OF THE CITIES

The discontent of these young people is exacerbated by the fact that most of them now live in cities—cities that are crumbling. The number of Middle East urban dwellers has increased by about a hundred million in thirty-five years. Roughly half the population now live in cities, and the number is expected to rise from 135 million to over 350 million by 2025. From 1985 to 1990 the greatest growth was in secondary cities (6 percent), compared to that (3.8 percent) of the nineteen largest cities with populations of over one million in 1990. This trend continued throughout the 1990s. Public services and utilities are already overwhelmed. In Jordan and Morocco, for example, one-third of the urban population lacks adequate sewerage, and water supplies are often erratic. Governments that attempt to provide these services through heavy subsidies only strain their budgets and thwart the investments needed to extend and improve what exists. As a result, regimes lose their legitimacy in the minds of those who spend much of their time thinking about what they see.

Rapid urbanization erodes the government's legitimacy in at least two ways. First, it strains the infrastructure and budget. The government's perceived

inability to provide housing, sewerage, potable water, and garbage collection raises doubts about its fundamental purpose. Second, the process of migration to the cities is always disorienting. Whether in Ayacucho or Asyut, the mixture of rural-urban migration with discontented provincial intellectuals proves to be highly toxic (if not yet fatal) to existing governments. The newly arrived migrants provide fertile fishing ground for Islamic militants, particularly when the migrant cannot find work and the (allegedly) decadent mores of the cities shock his sensibilities.

Consider Karachi, Pakistan. This city has grown from a population of one million at the time of the nation's independence to eleven million today, and it may grow to twenty million by 2015. Its managers are overwhelmed, as are its systems that provide water, electricity, transportation, health care, and education. In the slums, there is only one place that is cool when outside it is hot, clean when outside it is filthy, and calm when outside there is chaos—the mosque. Government policy has played an important (if negative) role here. Government incapacity and the resulting “abandonment of public space” to private Islamic schools, clinics, hospitals, and welfare agencies have done much to advance the fanatics' cause.

Some may object that (as far as one can tell) most of those responsible for the crimes of 11 September were privileged and educated. This, however, is entirely to be expected. George Orwell once quipped that “revolutionaries can always pronounce their aitches.” Revolutionaries are often, even typically, from relatively privileged backgrounds. Lenin was no *muzhik*, and Mao Tse-tung was the son of a rich peasant; yet the political and economic conditions of Russia and China when they were young profoundly shaped their opinions and ideals. People who knew Mohammed Atta (one of the 11 September hijackers) in Germany heard him speak of the “fat cats” running Egypt. It is no surprise that the “shock troops” of a revolutionary movement are educated and privileged. It would be quite ahistorical, however, to argue that their existence—or their appeal—is independent of the social conditions of their societies. Monocausal explanations of complex historical phenomena are always foolish.

It is also worth remembering that radicalism reaches far wider than al-Qa'ida. Movements in Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, Pakistan, Yemen, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia include many diverse actors.

## A HISTORICAL ANALOGY

The fanatics of al-Qa'ida display a close resemblance to the nihilists and other terror-prone, would-be revolutionaries of nineteenth-century Russia, as described by the Hungarian writer Tibor Szamuely: “The Russian intelligentsia was a social stratum composed of those politically aroused, vociferous, and

radical members of the educated classes who felt totally estranged from society. . . . The alienation of the intelligentsia from society was to a great extent inherent in the country's rudimentary social structure. . . . [U]nlike the West, Russia had no interest groups capable of giving strength, support, and substance to the intellectuals' protest. . . . The Russian intelligentsia had neither a place nor a stake in the existing order of things."<sup>13</sup> Szamuely goes on to say that just as the educated young men who piloted planes into the World Trade Center could easily have found well-paying jobs, there were considerable opportunities within the tsarist bureaucracy for men of talent. However, like the al-Qa'ida *mujahidiin*, many Russian intellectuals chose to spurn that path. "The *intelligent* . . . himself rejected the idea of serving a system founded on injustice, oppression and misery."<sup>14</sup> That is to say, ideas matter, and ideas are not formed in a socioeconomic vacuum.

Further similarities emerge. For example, in nineteenth-century Russia, as in the past generation of the Muslim world, there was a dramatic expansion of universities, whose doors opened for the first time to less privileged young men, often from rural backgrounds. "[After the Crimean War,] there was a marked shift in the social composition of the student body in the universities. . . . [I]t came to be made up more and more of so-called *raznochintsy*, 'people of diverse rank': sons of clergymen, peasants, petty officials, army officers, artisans, and tradesmen who had become divorced by virtue of their education or inclination from their fathers' social station and could no longer fit into the official estate system."<sup>15</sup> In a manner that Szamuely finds "very understandable," instead of feeling gratitude for the opportunity for upper mobility the "student-*raznochinets* brought with him a deep sense of the injustices of Russian life . . . [that] rapidly turned into hatred of the existing order."<sup>16</sup> Szamuely also notes that the intolerant utopianism of the student revolutionaries was a mirror-image of the violence of the tsarist state. Here too there are important parallels in many Muslim countries.

## THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENTS

The incompetence and authoritarianism of many Middle East and Muslim governments represent vital sources of the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism. These governments are overwhelmingly unelected, unaccountable, and corrupt. They provide no legitimate outlets for the discontentment of youth. Unsurprisingly, the young despise them. The old ideologies of these governments, largely varieties of nationalism, are perceived as failures. They have delivered neither material goods nor a sense of dignity at home or abroad. The half-century-long failure of Arab states to resolve the Palestinian situation and the inability of Pakistan to ease the lot of Kashmiri Muslims have contributed to the evident

corrosion of the regimes' legitimacy. Nationalism has not disappeared; it has been assimilated into the Islamists' discourse.

Governments are rightly faulted for their dismal economic performance. During the past twenty years, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (consisting of thirty countries) has seen its members' per capita incomes rise at about 1.4 percent per year. East Asia (excluding Japan) has, of course, grown much faster, at 5.8 percent per year—a rate that doubled per capita incomes in twelve and one-half years. Even Latin America, with its notorious “lost decade” of the debt-ridden 1980s, saw per capita incomes rise at just under 1 percent per year during the past two decades. In contrast, per capita incomes in the Arab states today are little different from what they were in 1980; some analysts would argue that their per capita movement has actually been negative, which is clearly the case in Saudi Arabia. Real wages and labor productivity there are about the same as in 1970.<sup>17</sup> This performance is worse than that of any other major country in the world, except for the countries of the former Soviet Union; even sub-Saharan Africa has done better.

The reasons for this woeful record are well understood. A combination of vast economic rents, authoritarian and centralizing states, and the fashion for import substitution in the third quarter of the twentieth century generated inward-looking political economies dominated by the state. Dismantling such structures has proved difficult, and the process of economic reform has often been tentative, dilatory, and slow. It is for this reason that the demand for labor has grown slowly while the supply has soared. Government economic failure is the other “blade of the scissors,” producing unemployment, falling real wages, and stagnant per capita incomes.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

How can the United States reduce the appeal of the utopian fanatics? It should approach the problem with considerable humility. Take the economic crisis. A strong case can be made that the economies of the Middle East have failed because of institutional and political deficiencies. Outsiders can do very little to promote institutional change, as the United States learned to its dismay in Russia and elsewhere. The deep cultural crisis of contemporary Islam's confrontation with modernity can be resolved only by Muslims.

The Middle East has been slow to embrace the international consensus (the “Washington consensus”) on what policies should be adopted to improve its economic management. Washington's view holds that only a private-sector, export-oriented economic development strategy has a chance of coping with the challenges facing the region. This view is best articulated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.<sup>18</sup> However, there are many other

adherents, particularly in the U.S. government and American academia and think tanks.

No one has formulated a policy mix for the Middle East more persuasive than that of the Washington consensus. The usual recommendation is to push the regimes harder to “reform their economies.” Although the consensus may be the best available strategy, it too is likely to fail. This may be especially true for the very poor nations and the relatively rich states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

For the poorest countries, on the consensus view, exports are highly unlikely to provide either adequate food (this is an increasingly serious problem) or a sufficient number of jobs. The domestic productive capacity has been (and is being) damaged by population growth and property-rights issues (e.g., groundwater), and natural-resource degradation may have gone so far as to be difficult to reverse. Further, because of the growth of the labor force, the provision of jobs via the “private-sector-led export model” is not credible; the infrastructure is too poor, and the labor force is overwhelmingly illiterate. The grim facts are that, at best, economic development in such countries is mainly a “holding action,” designed to prevent further deterioration and a consequent complete breakdown of order. The danger is that a breakdown will lead to the anarchy of a Somalia or Afghanistan, with the concomitant risk of the development of terrorist safe havens.

The Washington consensus does not easily fit the GCC states. The problems there are largely fiscal. The relief that the last several years have afforded appears unlikely to last; the “rent ceiling” of oil given by alternative energy production costs is about twenty-five dollars per barrel. Even at this maximum price, revenue would be short. The large numbers on the expenditure side arise from the perceived need for governments to spend heavily on defense, consumer subsidies, and public-sector job creation. The GCC states have local populations that are thoroughly dependent upon, and expect to receive, a wide variety of consumer subsidies. Their governments’ ability to meet their side of the social contract is doubtful. Most importantly, the large majority of nationals (in Kuwait the figure is 80 percent) are employed by the state. Consequently, shortfalls in government revenue translate quickly into difficulties with employment creation. The private sector is too dependent on state largesse, and too small to take up the slack. Most importantly, the countries of the Gulf have limited comparative advantages in non-oil goods or services. Wage rates, seriously inflated by past oil rents and current consumer subsidies, are far too high to compete in low-wage activities, but skills have not been developed to compete for more sophisticated work.

The orthodox economic growth strategy also faces formidable obstacles elsewhere, where it might plausibly work, such as in the “newly industrializing countries” of North Africa, Egypt, Iran, and possibly Jordan. Here the needed policy shifts may themselves be destabilizing, not only because the necessary changes involve austerity but because challenges face special interests that are major props of regime support and that occupy important, subsidized positions within the bureaucracy. Examples range from East Bank Jordanians to Egyptian workers in state-owned enterprises.

In the long run, the needed changes are also likely to destabilize in another way. Attracting the necessary volume of investment will almost certainly require greater governmental accountability and more transparent rules of the economic game. This is not to say that democracy is needed for growth but only to suggest that it is unlikely that regimes will attract the necessary private capital from their own citizens, or foreigners, if they persist in arbitrary, authoritarian practices. Since there is good reason to suppose that continued authoritarianism is in itself one of the causes for radicalism, and since continued unaccountable governance undermines economic growth, institutional change in the direction of greater participation and enhanced governmental accountability may constitute a key element of long-run stability.<sup>19</sup> The problem is, of course, that the transition from the current situation of authoritarian unaccountability is likely to be a rocky road.

The truth is that outsiders are largely (but not entirely) irrelevant to the process of deep institutional and cultural change that, alone, can ultimately overcome the profound, multitiered crisis facing the Muslim world. The United States can and must refrain from behavior that will provide fuel for fanatical arguments and discourage those in the Middle East who would respond differently to their own societies’ crises. U.S. foreign policy can play a role here. It must also continue to seek a settlement in the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis. Any resolution will be, to say the least, enormously difficult. However, the United States will not have peace with the young Arabs until that situation is resolved.

The United States also has an opportunity to contribute to change by modifying its policies, especially toward Iran. U.S. energy policies have long been stunningly myopic, and Americans continue to pay at the pump for many a Salafi *madrreseh* (school).

Regrettably, current indications are that U.S. policies will do little to ameliorate these problems. There is a tendency in current U.S. discourse to attribute the entirety of the problem to cultural failings in the Muslim world and to imagine that military power can tamp down if not resolve complex social, economic, political, and cultural struggles. This is unlikely.<sup>20</sup> Sadly, it appears probable that



both U.S. behavior and regional trends will continue to water the roots of Islamic radicalism.

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#### NOTES

1. Clement Henry and Robert Springborg argue this point extensively in *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001).
2. Isaiah Berlin, "Notes on Prejudice," *New York Review of Books*, 18 October 2001, p. 12.
3. Ibid.
4. For instance, Mahmoud Fandy, *Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), and Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy*, December 2001.
5. U.S. Census Bureau.
6. Jeffrey G. Williamson and Yousef Tareq, "Demographic Transitions and Economic Performance in MENA [Middle East and North Africa]," unpublished paper, Harvard Univ., 1999.
7. Philippe Fargues, "Demographic Explosion or Social Upheaval?" in *Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. Ghassan Salame (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994).
8. Richard Bulliet, "Twenty Years of Islamic Politics," *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1999.
9. Willem van Eeghen, "Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa," unpublished paper, World Bank, 1995.
10. It is worth noting that the 95 percent confidence interval around the World Bank's point estimates for poverty in MENA is between thirteen and fifty-one. No estimate of the poor as a percentage of the population between 13 percent and 51 percent can be ruled out.
11. A Maghrebi (North African) word that blends the Arabic *heta* (wall) with the French suffix "iste."
12. Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 2002).
13. Tibor Szamuely, *The Russian Tradition* (London: Fontana, 1974), pp. 192–4.
14. Ibid., p. 194.
15. Ibid., p. 197.
16. Ibid., p. 198.
17. Gary Hufbauer, *China, the United States, and the Global Economy* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1999).
18. World Bank, "Claiming the Future: Choosing Prosperity in the Middle East and North Africa," 1995; and International Monetary Fund, "Building on Progress: Reform and Growth in the Middle East and North Africa," 1996.
19. See Graham Fuller, "The Future of Political Islam," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2002.
20. This statement should not be understood to imply that military action is necessarily unwarranted but rather that such action is unlikely to be sufficient, and that unless carefully designed and executed, it may easily exacerbate the complex crisis that spawns Islamic radicalism.

## THE ARAB "STREET" AND THE MIDDLE EAST'S DEMOCRACY DEFICIT

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*Dale F. Eickelman*

Even before the events of 11 September 2001, it was already becoming clear that rapidly increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media were developing a public sphere in Muslim-majority societies in which large numbers of people—not just an educated, political, and economic elite—expect a say in religion, governance, and public issues.

*Dr. Eickelman is Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Human Relations at Dartmouth College, in Hanover, New Hampshire. Since earning a master's degree in Islamic studies at McGill University in Montreal and a master's and doctorate in anthropology at the University of Chicago, he has taught at New York University and at Dartmouth College, where he was co-chair of the Asian Studies Program from 1994 to 1995 and chairman of the Anthropology Department, 1997–2000. The most recent of his numerous books and other publications on complex societies, the anthropology of Islam and the Middle East, and related issues are the fourth (2002) edition of his *The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach*, and *New Media and the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (1999, coedited with Jon W. Anderson, second edition 2003).*

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State authorities continue in many ways to be arbitrary and restrict what is said in the press, the broadcast media, and in public, but the methods of avoiding such censorship and control have rapidly proliferated. Today, silence in public no longer implies ignorance.

Silence, or apparent acquiescence, is often a weapon of the weak. In some countries of the Arabian Peninsula, a "politics of silence," in which audiences applaud tepidly rather than with enthusiasm, is one of the few forms of public protest available, despite the simulacra of democratic forms offered by repressive and authoritarian governments.<sup>1</sup> For instance, Tunisia's President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali was reelected with 99 percent of cast ballots in 1994, but few Tunisians would take at face value his response to a French journalist's question that such results, far from being "a bit too good," merely reflected "the profound realities of the Arab-Muslim world" and that the vote was "a massive adhesion to a project of national

salvation.”<sup>2</sup> Public silence in Tunisia in the face of such claims does not equal agreement with them.

Washington policy makers recognized the implications of this new sense of the public in the Arab world well before the 11 September terrorist attacks. Among them, it is called the “Arab street,”

a new phenomenon of public accountability, which we have seldom had to factor into our projections of Arab behavior in the past. The information revolution, and particularly the daily dose of uncensored television coming out of local TV stations like al-Jazira and international coverage by CNN and others, is shaping public opinion, which, in turn, is pushing Arab governments to respond. We do not know, and the leaders themselves do not know, how that pressure will impact on Arab policy in the future.<sup>3</sup>

The use of the term “street,” rather than “public sphere” or “public,” imputes passivity, or a propensity to easy manipulation, and implies a lack of formal or informal leadership. Nonetheless, its use indicates that policy makers at least acknowledge that even regional authoritarian and single-party states now have “publics” to take into account.

## BEING MUSLIM AND MODERN

The spread of higher education, greater mobility, and proliferating and accessible means of communication have contributed significantly to the fragmentation of religious and political authority, challenging authoritarianism in many domains.<sup>4</sup> This process could lead to more open societies, just as globalization has been accompanied by such developments as Vatican II and secular human rights movements. Many movements show the positive side of globalization, in which small but determined transnational groups work toward goals that improve the human condition. The leaders of such movements in the Arab and the Muslim-majority worlds, including interpreters of religious matters, often lack theological and philosophical sophistication. Some can, however, motivate minorities and at least persuade wider publics of the justice of their causes, changing implicit, practical understandings of ethical issues in the process.

There is also a darker side to globalization. The fragmentation of authority and the growing ability of large numbers of people to participate in wider spheres of religious and political debate and practical action can also have highly negative outcomes. This darker side is epitomized by Osama Bin Laden and the al-Qa‘ida terrorist movement. This organization is not noted primarily for its theological sophistication. In quality of thought, Bin Laden and his associates, such as the Egyptian physician Ayman al-Zawahiri, are no match for Thomas Hobbes, Martin Heidegger, Egypt’s (and Qatar’s) Yusuf al-Qaradawi, or Syria’s Muhammad Shahrur. Al-Qa‘ida has, nonetheless, demonstrated a public

relations genius that—combined with massive and dramatic terrorist acts—caught the world by surprise and reinforced its public declarations of anti-Western sentiments.

The Bin Laden/al-Qa'ida view of world politics gains its power and timelessness by appealing to unity and faith regardless of the balance of power against

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*Al-Qa'ida takes for granted rising levels of education.*

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them, and by attributing the evils of this world to Christians and Jews, as well as to Muslims who associate with them (and thus

subvert the goals of the *umma*, the worldwide community of true believers). Does not the Qur'an say that polytheists should be fought until they cease to exist (Q. 9:5) and that those who do not rule by God's law are unbelievers who, by implication, should be resisted (Q. 5:44)?<sup>5</sup>

These interpretations of scripture are highly contestable and should not be taken as harbingers of a coming "clash of civilizations" or as, in Gilles Kepel's (more ecumenical) phrase, the "revenge of God."<sup>6</sup> This "theology" does not go back to ancient roots or to the Qur'an, although some extremists make such claims, but is thoroughly modern; it is basically an update of the beliefs of Islamic Jihad, an Egyptian group best known for its assassination of Anwar al-Sadat in 1981. Only a tiny minority has been inspired to lethal action by such interpretations. However, that minority builds on a hybrid social base that can bring together the totally different worlds of "uneducated Pashtun villagers and rich Arab city dwellers."<sup>7</sup> Some elements of the al-Qa'ida message—especially accounts of injustices perpetrated against Muslims in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir, and elsewhere—capture the imagination of broad circles, although their agreement does not translate into action.

Many voices and practices in the Muslim world call for or tend toward more open societies and diverse religious interpretations.<sup>8</sup> Even if ignored because they are not heard in English or the major European languages, they are becoming more significant. However, cautious autocracies are hesitant to contest directly the advocates of fanaticism and intolerance. There will always be ideas at hand to justify intolerance and violence, and there will also always be ways for terrorists to manipulate open societies for their nefarious ends; countering radical ideologies and theologies of violence is not easy. Yet the proliferation of voices openly debating the role of Islam in contemporary society contributes significantly to weakening the appeal of terrorists.

One Islamic thinker in the Gulf region, for example, argues that the principle of equality as a foundational idea was firmly established in the U.S. Declaration of Independence in 1776 but that the implementation of the principle took nearly two centuries to achieve. The right for free men to vote on an equal basis

was granted only in 1850, and African-American males got the right to vote in 1870. Women got the right to vote in 1920, and the poll tax was eliminated only in 1964. He sees the Islamic principle of *shura*, or consultation, as identical to democracy and as an idea that can only be achieved incrementally and never fully realized, as in the American case.<sup>9</sup> In a similar manner, Syria's Muhammad Shahrur, in his many books and on satellite television, calls for a rethinking of the Islamic tradition to break the hold of the *'ulama* ("the body of learned men"—that is, canonical religious authorities) and popular preachers on Qur'anic interpretation.<sup>10</sup>

Thinkers and religious leaders like Turkey's Fethullah Gülen and Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid hold that democracy and Islam are fully compatible and that Islam prescribes no particular form of governance, certainly not arbitrary rule. They argue that the central Qur'anic message is that Muslims must take responsibility for their own society. Even the headscarf is not essential, Gülen argues—taking up a theme as politically explosive in Turkey as it is in France—only the requirement of modest dress and comportment. The views of such thinkers (and there are many) are less well known outside the Arab and Muslim-majority world than, for instance, once were the views of Solidarity activists in Poland or the advocates of liberation theology. The courage of those in the Islamic world who advocate toleration, even those who practice it in private without articulating their views, is remarkable. These thinkers recognize that there are many religious differences between Islam and the West, but they also acknowledge many important points in common.

## MODERN TRANSNATIONAL VIDEOS

In the years ahead, open communication and public diplomacy will be increasingly significant in countering the image that the likes of the al-Qa'ida terrorist network and Osama Bin Laden assert for themselves as "guardians of Islamic values." Al-Qa'ida itself may fade from prominence, but the views it advocates resonate within the Muslim-majority world and have parallels outside it. In the fight against terrorism, of which Bin Laden is the photogenic icon, the first step is to recognize that he is as thoroughly a part of the modern world as was Cambodia's French-educated Pol Pot. Bin Laden presents himself as a traditional Islamic warrior brought up to date (though the "tradition" is an invented one). The language and content of his videotaped appeals assert his modernity even more strongly, although less obviously, than do his camouflage jacket, Kalashnikov, and Timex watch.

Consider a two-hour al-Qa'ida recruitment videotape in Arabic that has made its way since May 2000 to many Middle Eastern video shops and Western news media.<sup>11</sup> It is a skillful production, as fast-paced and gripping as any Hindu

fundamentalist video justifying the destruction in 1992 of the Ayodhya mosque in India, or the political “attack videos” used in American presidential campaigning.<sup>12</sup> The 1988 “Willie Horton” campaign video—which showed a mug shot of a convicted rapist who had committed a second rape during a weekend furlough from a Massachusetts prison, while a voice-over portrayed Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis as “soft” on crime—was a marketing masterpiece that combined a conventional, if explicit, message with another menacing, underlying one intended to galvanize undecided voters. The al-Qa‘ida video, although it was directed at a different audience—presumably Arab youth who are alienated, unemployed, and often living in desperate conditions—shows an equal mastery of modern propaganda.

The recruitment video begins with the attack on the USS *Cole* (DDG 67) in Yemen, then cuts to a montage implying coordinated worldwide aggression against Muslims in Palestine, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Indonesia. Images follow of U.S. generals being received by Saudi princes, intimating collusion with the infidel West by leaders of oppressive Muslim regimes, thereby undermining their legitimacy. The tape continues by attributing the sufferings of the Iraqi people to American brutality against Muslims. Many of the images are taken from daily Western video news; the BBC and CNN logos add to their authenticity, just as the rebroadcast by CNN and the BBC of Qatar’s al-Jazeera satellite television logo has added authenticity to Western coverage of Bin Laden.

Alternating with these scenes of devastation and oppression are images of Osama Bin Laden—posing in front of bookshelves or seated on the ground like an Islamic religious scholar, holding in his hand the Qur’an. Radiating charismatic authority, he recounts the Prophet Muhammad’s flight from Mecca to Medina when the early Islamic movement was threatened by idolaters, and his triumphant return; the analogy is repeatedly drawn. Bin Laden also stresses the need for a *jihad*, or struggle, for the cause of Islam against the “crusaders” and “Zionists.” Later images show military training in Afghanistan (including target practice at a video of Bill Clinton projected against a wall). A final sequence portrays—as the word “solution” flashes across the screen and a voice-over recites from the Qur’an—an Israeli soldier in full riot gear retreating from a Palestinian boy throwing stones.

### A THOROUGHLY MODERN FANATIC

Osama Bin Laden, like many of his associates, is imbued with not only the techniques but the values of the modern world, even if only to reject them. A 1971 photograph shows him at age fourteen on a family holiday in Oxford, in the United Kingdom, posing with two half-brothers and some Spanish girls their

own age. English would have been their common language. Bin Laden had studied English at a private school in Jidda, and English was later useful for his civil engineering courses at King Abdul Aziz University. Unlike many of his now-estranged half-brothers, who were educated in Europe and the United States as well as in Saudi Arabia, Osama studied only in Saudi Arabia; nonetheless, he was familiar with European society.

Organizational skills he learned in the university came into play when he joined the *mujahidin* ("strugglers," or holy warriors) against the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Whether or not he actually met American intelligence officers in the field, they, like their Saudi and Pakistani counterparts, were pleased at his participation and his willingness to recruit fighters from throughout the Arab world. Likewise, Bin Laden's many business enterprises flourished, even under highly adverse conditions. In both settings, he skillfully sustained a flexible multinational organization in the face of opposition, moving cash, people, and supplies almost undetected across international frontiers.

If Western policy makers and intelligence professionals never underestimated the organizational effectiveness of Bin Laden and his associates, neither should they underestimate their ability to convey a message that appeals to at least some Muslims. One need not have credentials as an established Islamic scholar in order to have one's ideas taken seriously. As Sudan's former attorney general and speaker of the parliament, the Sorbonne-educated Hasan al-Turabi (also leader of his country's Muslim Brotherhood), asserted two decades ago, "Because all knowledge is divine and religious, a chemist, an engineer, an economist, or a jurist" are all men of learning.<sup>13</sup> Bin Laden, a civil engineer, exemplifies Turabi's point. Some in his audience do not look for ability to cite authoritative texts; instead, they respond to his apparent skill in applying generally accepted religious tenets to current political and social issues.

#### THE MESSAGE ON THE ARAB STREET

Bin Laden's lectures circulate in book form in the Arab world, but video is the main vehicle of communication. Mass education and new communications technologies enable large numbers of Arabs to hear—and see—al-Qa'ida's message directly. The use of CNN-like "zippers"—the ribbons of words streamed beneath images—shows that al-Qa'ida takes for granted rising levels of education. Increasingly, its audience has access to both conventional and new media, such as the Internet.<sup>14</sup> The entry of the Middle East into an era of mass communication has established standard Arabic (as opposed to its widely differing and often mutually incomprehensible regional dialects) as a lingua franca. In Morocco in the early 1970s, for instance, rural people might ask speakers of



standard Arabic to “translate” newscasts in the transnational speech of the state radio into local, colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required.

Bin Laden’s message does not depend on religious themes alone. Like that of the Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, his message contains many secular elements. Khomeini often alluded to the “wretched of the earth” and drew on images appealing to third-world militants in general. At least for a time, his language appealed equally to Iran’s religiously minded sector and its secular Left. For Bin Laden, the equivalent themes are the oppression and corruption of many Arab governments, for which he lays the blame—as he does for violence and oppression in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, and elsewhere—on the West. One need not be religious to rally to such themes. A poll taken in Morocco in late September 2001 showed that, though a majority of Moroccans condemned the 11 September bombings, 41 percent sympathized with Bin Laden’s message.<sup>15</sup> An early November 2001 poll of 11,500 Muslims in Britain showed that only 21 percent thought that the United States was justified in blaming al-Qa’ida for the attacks in America on 11 September and that 57 percent disagreed with Prime Minister Tony Blair when he claimed that the U.S. and British military action in Afghanistan was not an attack on Islam.<sup>16</sup>

Osama Bin Laden and the al-Qa’ida terrorist movement are thus reaching at least part of the Arab “street.” The U.S. director of central intelligence, George J. Tenet, testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2001 that “the right catalyst—such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence—can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive [Arab] public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure.”<sup>17</sup>

### COUNTERING THE DEMOCRACY DEFICIT

The Middle East in general has a democracy deficit, in which “unauthorized” leaders or critics such as Saad Eddin Ibrahim—founder and director of Cairo’s Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies, a nongovernmental organization that promotes democracy in Egypt—suffer harassment or prison terms. It is because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations, and unrestricted expression that the “restive” public, increasingly educated and influenced by hard-to-censor new media, can take action. By “without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure” George Tenet meant an absence not of leadership altogether but of leadership detectable by governments that have lost the confidence of social elements. An emerging Palestinian leader, say, would be foolhardy to allow him or herself to become identifiable to Israeli or other intelligence services.

One consequence of this democracy deficit is to magnify the power of the “street” in the Arab world. Bin Laden, speaking in the vivid language of popular Islamic preachers, builds on a deep and widespread resentment of the West and the local ruling elites associated with it. The lack of formal outlets for opinion on public concerns makes it easier for zealots, claiming the authority of religion, to hijack the Arab street.

One immediate response possible for the West is to acknowledge the existence of the Arab street and to learn to speak directly to it. This task has already begun, and an available point of access is al-Jazeera, which was obscure to all except specialists until 11 September 2001. This Qatari satellite television network is a premier source in the Arab world of uncensored news and opinion. It is more, however, than the Arab equivalent of CNN. Uncensored news and opinions increasingly shape public opinion even in places like Damascus and Algiers. Public opinion, in turn, pushes Arab governments to be more responsive to their citizens, or at least to say that they are.

Far from seeking to censor al-Jazeera, limit al-Qa‘ida’s access to the Western media, or create a de facto Office of Disinformation within the Pentagon—an unfortunate early proposal of the U.S. government after the September terror attacks—the United States should specifically avoid censorship. Al-Qa‘ida statements should be treated with the same caution as those of any other news source.

Ironically, at almost the same moment that national security adviser Condoleezza Rice asked the American television networks not to air al-Qa‘ida videos unedited, a former senior CIA officer, Graham Fuller, was explaining in Arabic on al-Jazeera how American policy making works. His appearance on al-Jazeera made a significant impact, as did Secretary of State Colin Powell’s presence on a later program and that of former U.S. ambassador Christopher Ross, who speaks fluent Arabic. Likewise, the timing and content of the response of Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain to an earlier Bin Laden tape suggests how to take the emerging Arab public seriously. The day after al-Jazeera broadcast the Bin Laden tape, Blair asked for and received an opportunity to respond. In his reply, Blair—in a first for a Western leader—directly addressed the Arab public through the Arab media, explaining coalition goals in attacking al-Qa‘ida and the Taliban, and challenging Bin Laden’s claim to speak in the name of Islam.

Such appearances enhance the West’s ability to communicate its primary message—that the war against terrorism is a struggle not of one civilization against another but against terrorism and fanaticism in all societies. Western policies and actions are subject to public scrutiny and are quite likely to be misunderstood, especially by people living under closed regimes or faced with apparent contradictory emphases in foreign policy and actions. U.S. government statements about

the evil of the Iraqi regime are hard to explain to the Arab street when the American leadership appears unable or even unwilling to restrain Israeli incursions into the West Bank and Gaza. Public diplomacy can significantly diminish some misapprehensions, but it may also require some uncomfortable policy decisions. For instance, America may be forced to exert more diplomatic pressure on Israel to alter its methods of dealing with Palestinians.

Western public diplomacy in the Middle East also entails great care in uncharted waters. As an Oxford University social linguist, Clive Holes, has pointed out, the linguistic genius who thought up the original name for the campaign to oust the Taliban, "Operation INFINITE JUSTICE," did a major disservice to the Western goal. The expression was literally and accurately translated into Arabic as *'adala ghayr mutanahiya*, connoting an earthly power arrogating to itself the task of divine retribution. Likewise, President George W. Bush's inadvertent and unscripted use of the word "crusade" gave al-Qa'ida spokesmen—and many others—an opportunity to attack the intentions of Bush and the West.

Mistakes will be made, but information and arguments that reach the Arab public sphere, including on al-Jazeera, will eventually have an impact for good or for ill. Some Westerners might condemn al-Jazeera as biased, and it may well be, in terms of the assumptions it makes about its audience. However, al-Jazeera has already broken a taboo by regularly inviting official Israeli spokespersons to comment live on current issues. Muslim religious scholars, both in the Middle East and in the West, have already spoken out on the network against al-Qa'ida's claim to act in the name of Islam. Other courageous voices, such as Egyptian playwright Ali Salem, have even employed humor for that purpose.<sup>18</sup>

The United States must recognize that the best way to mitigate the continuing threat of terrorism is to encourage Middle Eastern states to be much more responsive to longings for real participation in governance and to aid local nongovernmental organizations working toward this goal. As occurred in Egypt in the case of Saad Eddin Ibrahim, some countries may see such activities as subversive. Nonetheless, and whether Arab ruling elites like it or not, the Arab street is turning into a public sphere that will expect to be heard on public issues and matters of governance.

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## GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

### First, Try Coercive Diplomacy

*Captain William S. Langenheim, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve*

Since the 11 September terrorist attacks, the Bush administration has made it abundantly clear that it is not willing to accept the status quo in Iraq. It has vigorously asserted that Saddam Hussein's continued pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and his past links to terrorism could make his regime the next target in the "war on terrorism."<sup>1</sup> At the same time, virtually all Nato allies and every one of America's regional strategic partners have disagreed with the use of military force either to compel Iraqi compliance with Security Council resolutions or to topple Saddam's regime.<sup>2</sup> The result is a growing divergence between the United States and its European allies and Middle Eastern partners at a time when, more than ever, the willing assistance of these states is needed if counterterrorism against al-Qa'ida is to succeed.

Unfortunately, as the rhetoric has grown more heated, pundits on each side have emphasized the dangers of their rivals' preferred strategy while whitewashing the shortcomings of their own. Hence Americans have increasingly been led to view the Europeans as "free-riders" and to pay little heed to the concerns of

Arab states for regional stability.<sup>3</sup> Europeans in turn complain of American unilateralism and hegemonic ambitions, ignoring in the case of Iraq how their own policies have shaped the growing tendency of the United States toward self-reliance. Meanwhile, the Arab governments, whose support for military action against Iraq has been less than enthusiastic since the end of the Gulf War, find their own national agendas increasingly co-opted by popular outrage over the

*Captain Langenheim is a reserve infantry officer currently on active duty with Marine Forces UNITAS, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. A 1995 graduate of the University of Virginia, he also holds a master's degree in security studies from Georgetown University. While on active duty, Captain Langenheim's postings included duty with the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, and Interim Marine Corps Security Force Company, Bahrain.*

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Israeli-Palestinian conflict, fueled by a perception that the United States deliberately chooses not to restrain its Israeli “puppet.”

There is a way, however, to break the impasse between the United States and a number of key states whose cooperation is critical not only for potential military operations against Iraq but also for the broader war on terrorism. It would involve delinking the Iraqi question from the war on terrorism and undertaking a new diplomatic offensive to compel Iraqi compliance with existing Security Council resolutions. This approach would avoid reducing Washington’s choice to the two unsatisfactory extremes of unilateral action against Saddam or an outright abandonment of the leverage gained by the Gulf War coalition.

Such an approach would not be the first time the United States used coercive diplomacy as a means of bringing about allied consensus on Iraq: “Although the strategy of coercive diplomacy had little chance of success [in 1990–91], the attempt to employ it in the hope of avoiding war was necessary for building and maintaining international and domestic support for the objective of liberating Kuwait. Ironically, the failure of coercive diplomacy was necessary to gain support for war when war became the last resort.”<sup>4</sup>

Coercive diplomacy against Iraq in late 2002 represents an opportunity to change the rules of the game. There are reasons to hope that the approach would succeed; yet even if it is doomed to failure, by making the attempt the United States would demonstrate that the Iraqi regime’s belligerent and intransigent attitude, not American warmongering, is the root of the conflict. Nothing is likely to make American military action, if that is ultimately required, popular, but giving diplomacy a final chance might make it possible for key allies and regional partners to support it.

The first section below addresses the strategic objectives of the United States concerning Iraq and identifies a number of specific reasons why Washington cannot indefinitely accept the status quo. The argument then turns to why coercive diplomacy should be the principal means for pursuing American strategic priorities in Iraq, laying out the case for postponing unilateral use of force and assessing coercive diplomacy’s strengths and weaknesses as a tool for accomplishing U.S. objectives. The third section tackles the central issue—can Saddam’s regime be coerced?—by studying several cases in which the United States used coercive diplomacy against Iraq during the 1990s. The fourth section derives a framework that might make success possible or, failing that, from which Iraq would derive no significant benefits should coercive diplomacy fail and war become a necessity.

## THE STATUS QUO IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE

There is strong international agreement that the present state of affairs in Iraq is not acceptable, but when the discussion turns to alternatives this consensus quickly breaks down. On the one hand, the United States argues that so long as Saddam Hussein or his designated heirs remain in power, Iraq will be a source of regional instability and a danger to not only its neighbors but the American people as well. On the other hand, virtually all European allies of the United States, as well as Iraq's Arab neighbors, maintain that Saddam's regime has been contained and weakened to the point that it no longer threatens security. Far greater concerns, from their perspectives, are flawed American policy making and military heavy-handedness, which increase the chance that moderate regimes, like Saudi Arabia, will fall victim to popular discontent.

Nevertheless, in the "post-9/11" era, with the vulnerability of the American homeland more clearly perceived, the Iraqi threat can no longer be defined solely by Saddam's ability to challenge the regional order. Instead, the union of Iraq's continued pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, past links to terrorism (including an assassination attempt on a former American president), and a decade's worth of belligerence toward the United States has made Saddam's regime a direct threat to the American people.<sup>5</sup> For this reason the long-term American objective in Iraq must be regime change.

Yet as desirable as toppling Saddam's regime is, it remains easier said than done. There are three options for removing the Ba'athists from power—a military coup, an American-backed insurgency, or an American invasion—and each has its drawbacks. While there is no quick or easy way to topple Saddam's regime, there are compelling reasons for not delaying action longer than is absolutely necessary. As daunting as the task of regime change may seem, however, it is certainly not as bad as the eventual probable alternative, a nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein.

Deterring Saddam poses particular challenges, largely because he cares so little about the suffering of the Iraqi people. Combined with Saddam's history of reckless foreign policy behavior when he perceives an advantage over his rivals, this creates the potential for a dangerous game of brinkmanship involving Iraq, Israel, and the United States. Given an atomic arsenal, it is a virtual certainty that Saddam would sooner or later brandish such weapons in an attempt to reassert Iraqi regional hegemony. As in the past, he would almost certainly misread his adversaries, underestimate the risks involved, and once more sweep the entire region into a bloody war—this time between nuclear powers.

Another reason for bringing about a regime change is the cost of maintaining the current policy of containment. It can be measured in three ways. First, the Cato Institute estimates that over eighty billion dollars are being spent annually



to make the southern Gulf states de facto protectorates.<sup>6</sup> In view of the fact that the United States receives less than a quarter of its oil from the region, these expenses go largely toward safeguarding its allies' access to Gulf oil. Some of those allies helped finance DESERT STORM but have made little or no effort to share the burden of containing Saddam since that time.

Second, containment continues to cost Iraqi lives, due to the deprivations imposed upon that country by economic sanctions, but more so by Saddam's misallocation of Iraq's income. The UN estimates that during the early and mid-1990s, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died from malnutrition and disease. After Saddam's 1996 acceptance of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 986, the "oil for food" program, the mortality rate should have decreased significantly; notwithstanding, an August 1999 UNICEF report estimated that some ninety thousand Iraqis, mostly infants and the elderly, had died during the preceding year from malnutrition.<sup>7</sup> By 1999, Iraq's income from oil exports had returned to pre-1990 levels, demonstrating that Saddam continues to play upon the civilized world's compassion for the helpless Iraqi people in a callous effort to get the sanctions removed.<sup>8</sup>

The third, and least tangible, cost of containment is measured in the spread of anti-Americanism throughout the Middle East, including moderate Arab states that have historically been the closest regional partners of the United States. The roots of this anti-American sentiment are difficult to trace, but in general it stems from the perception that the United States is hypocritical and greedy. Not surprisingly, anti-Americanism has been further fueled by the dramatic escalation in fighting in 2002 between the Israelis and Palestinians. The net result is that, even if the Bush administration wanted to maintain indefinitely the policy of containing Iraq, it appears increasingly doubtful that key Arab states will continue to provide the necessary host-nation support.

To date, the Bush administration has vigorously threatened military action, unilaterally if necessary, in hopes of motivating elements within Saddam's regime to revolt and bring an end to Iraq's isolation and suffering. Unfortunately, Saddam appears none the weaker for this ominous rhetoric; instead, the U.S. position vis-à-vis its allies and regional partners has suffered.

### WHY ATTEMPT COERCIVE DIPLOMACY?

An argument can be made for postponing unilateral action in favor of attempting to accomplish the U.S. objectives in Iraq, on grounds of the geopolitical realities presently confronting the United States and of the advantages of the coercive-diplomacy approach itself.

### *The Right Cause but the Wrong Time*

There are several strong reasons to forgo unilateral action against Saddam's regime at present. These include the status of operations against al-Qa'ida and the Taliban, the effects upon regional stability of the dramatic escalation in violence between the Israelis and Palestinians, the nature of the Pentagon's preferred strategy for removing Saddam's regime, and the limits upon the Pentagon's ability to conduct operations against Iraq in the short term. Individually, none of these factors precludes immediate action. However, in combination they build a strong case for alternatives to the unilateral use of force until more favorable conditions arise.

**"Remember 9/11."** The United States is currently committed to the task of destroying al-Qa'ida and the remnants of the Taliban. While by no means a major theater war, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM remains a significant military commitment.<sup>9</sup> To date American forces have made good progress in their efforts to prevent the Taliban from challenging Afghanistan's new government, but as the commander of Central Command, General Tommy Franks, points out, the Taliban is far from destroyed.<sup>10</sup> Still, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM has made promising strides toward its principal objective—hindering al-Qa'ida's ability to recruit and train would-be terrorists in its former Afghan sanctuary. Simultaneously, a host of smaller military and law enforcement operations at the local level around the globe appear to have degraded al-Qa'ida's ability to carry out terrorist attacks, at least temporarily, by forcing its members into "survival mode." Recent arrests in Pakistan and efforts against the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines are examples of this cooperation.<sup>11</sup>

Despite these successes, a year after the "9/11" attacks the United States is just beginning to penetrate al-Qa'ida's shadowy underworld, and there is still a long way to go. The utility of U.S. military ventures must therefore be weighed against their impact upon the global war on terrorism. This is not to say that the war on terrorism should in all cases prevail; clearly there are potentialities that could dictate temporarily setting it aside. Evidence of Iraq's imminent acquisition of an atomic bomb would certainly be one, but an Iraqi nuclear capability does not appear to be an immediate danger.

Given the extent to which the worldwide struggle against al-Qa'ida depends upon the cooperation of allied governments, now is not the time to undertake a campaign in Iraq, if doing so would likely jeopardize relations with key allies and strategic partners. Hence it would seem that unilateral action in Iraq should be the last resort, not the first.

**Jerusalem before Baghdad.** The vigor with which Arab nations have urged the United States to mediate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has enormously

constrained American freedom of action. The Arab League's adoption in March 2002 of a Saudi peace plan, and subsequent overtures by Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, demonstrate that the Arab states want desperately to end the violence in Israel and the occupied territories.<sup>12</sup> They are motivated partly by fear of their own populations' growing discontent and, in some cases, by a need to deflect attention from their own links to terrorism and Islamic extremism.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the unanimous declarations on the final day of the Arab League summit signaling support for Iraqi attempts to mend fences with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and firm opposition to any American use of force against Saddam's regime, indicate that the U.S. position on Iraq has lost a great deal of ground within the Arab world.

Those in favor of unilateral U.S. action question the relevance of such gestures, pointing out that, historically, pan-Arab rhetoric has not been backed up by action. Additionally, they cite Vice President Richard Cheney's claims that there is no rift between the United States and its Arab partners; in March he warned viewers of NBC's *Meet the Press* not to believe everything they read in the newspaper.<sup>14</sup> However, Bush administration claims of satisfaction with the level of support received from Arab states have met with considerable skepticism. The vice president may indeed have found a sympathetic ear in several Arab capitals, but there is little visible evidence of it. In any case, private admissions of sympathy are a long way from the public expressions of support needed for the United States to pursue the destruction of Saddam's regime.

Now is not the best time to declare, in effect, that the Arab states are either with the United States or against it in the war on terrorism by making Iraq the next target in that struggle. Their support is essential to prosecuting operations against al-Qa'ida and other terrorist organizations. Furthermore, with the right motivation Iraq's neighbors could turn against Saddam for their own reasons, as they have in the past. Arab governments have no love for Saddam; their recent pro-Iraqi rhetoric is just that—pro-Iraqi, not pro-Saddam. Their overarching concerns in this connection are for regional stability and for the welfare of the Iraqi people; it is still possible to gain the genuine support of moderate Arab states if the United States demonstrates that it shares these concerns. Coercive diplomacy is more likely to do so than unilateral action.

The real challenge for the United States remains convincing its Arab partners that there is no link between the Iraqi and Palestinian questions.<sup>15</sup> The United States needs to disconnect the war against terrorism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the Iraqi question. A key step would be recognition that the issue with Iraq is not state sponsorship of terrorism (recent evidence of which has proven difficult to find) but the regime's aggressive strategic agenda and its noncompliance with Security Council demands.<sup>16</sup>

*No Margin for Error.* Presumably, if force is used against Iraq, an invasion to occupy the entire country would be the last resort. Theoretically, the primary objective of regime change can be achieved short of major war. Nevertheless, the Pentagon is likely to err on the side of caution, advocating a punishing air campaign followed by a vigorous ground offensive designed to overthrow swiftly the Ba'thist regime while simultaneously denying Saddam the opportunity to put into play a "doomsday" scenario.<sup>17</sup> Clearly this would be a daunting task.

Truly unilateral American military action does not seem feasible at this time, for reasons stemming from the nature of a large military campaign in Iraq. The support of key regional partners and European allies would be critical; a conventional military campaign, even if overwhelmingly carried out by American forces (as during Operation DESERT STORM), would require access to bases and facilities around the globe. Yet, the future of American military forces in Saudi Arabia remains in doubt, and even staunch allies like Kuwait have balked at the notion of a DESERT STORM II.

Predictably, the growing preference for a conventional strategy has come at the expense of pro-opposition sectors of the administration. The balance has tipped in favor of the conventional option because of wariness among senior State Department officials and the Joint Chiefs of Staff about relying upon the weak and fractured Iraqi opposition.<sup>18</sup> As analysts point out, the Iraqi National Congress (INC) and its constituent organizations bear little resemblance to the Afghan Northern Alliance, just as Saddam's regime shares few similarities with the Taliban.<sup>19</sup> Because of these disparities, any American military operation in Iraq will have to be on a much larger scale than the war in Afghanistan.<sup>20</sup> If the Bush administration ultimately chooses to employ military force to remove Saddam from power, it will first need to build up its forces in the region significantly. During the harsh Persian Gulf summer, with no major buildup of American forces initiated, the Bush administration effectively accepted postponement of major military action until November 2002 at the earliest, after which the weather would be more favorable.

To succeed, the Pentagon's strategy must meet three conditions. First, the likelihood of various Iraqi preemptive actions must be provided for. Saddam is unlikely to repeat his error of 1990 and idly permit an American military buildup for invasion, particularly when such an invasion's stated purpose is the destruction of his regime. The inability of the Iraqi armed forces to challenge American forces lends credence to fears that such preemption will be asymmetric in nature, possibly taking the form of state-sponsored terrorism employing chemical or biological weapons. Because of the danger of preemption, the second condition for success demands that the United States be able to assemble its forces quickly; a five-month preparation like Operation DESERT SHIELD is not

an option. Most experts estimate an invasion would require roughly 250,000 personnel, possibly organized into an Army heavy armored corps, a reinforced Marine expeditionary force, and a mix of Air Force expeditionary forces and aircraft carrier battle groups, depending upon basing options.<sup>21</sup> Third, the United States must have the willpower to target elements of the Iraqi regime that enable Saddam to remain in power. Because such forces and facilities are likely to have been placed in residential areas, this means accepting the possibility of significant collateral damage and civilian casualties.

Such a campaign cannot be hastily thrown together. Detailed planning, particularly in the phasing of force deployments, must be conducted with host nations, and well in advance if a shortened operational time line is to be achieved.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, host-nation support is essential for protection against Iraqi preemptive action or local discontent. Furthermore, both the American people and the governments of allies and regional partners must be steeled for the challenges that lie ahead—the former in terms of American servicemen killed in action, the latter in terms of Iraqi civilians caught in the crossfire.<sup>23</sup>

#### IN THE MEANTIME: THE CASE FOR COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

Because of common misperceptions, let us make clear what coercive diplomacy is *not*. It is neither a “silver bullet” that will solve “on the cheap” all U.S. problems with Iraq nor an ill-conceived gimmick that implicitly rewards Saddam’s regime for its recalcitrance. Coercive diplomacy of necessity relies heavily upon the credible threat of punishment, but it does not compromise military operations. Furthermore, the target of coercive diplomacy is not necessarily Saddam Hussein, who may be personally immune to coercion at this point. Rather, the target is the regime as a whole—the aim being to demoralize the political elite so as to make it likely to overthrow Saddam or compel his accession to American demands.

##### *What Is Coercive Diplomacy?*

Coercive diplomacy seeks to “back one’s demand on an adversary with a threat of punishment for noncompliance that he will consider credible enough to persuade him to comply with the demand.”<sup>24</sup> A shortcoming of this definition is the tendency to confuse it with the broader concept of “compellence.”<sup>25</sup> Because force can be used to achieve either offensive (aggressive) or defensive (status quo) agendas, it is important to distinguish between the two. Coercive diplomacy is defensive in nature; it is an effort “to persuade an opponent to stop and/or undo an action he has already embarked upon.” Equivalent methods for offensive purposes are better described as “blackmail strategies.”<sup>26</sup>

Policy makers attempting to pursue coercive diplomacy must make four basic choices, according to the particular circumstances: what demands to make of the adversary; whether or not to instill a sense of urgency in the adversary, and if so, how best to do it; whether to threaten overtly some form of punishment for noncompliance, and if so, how best to convey that threat; and whether to rely solely upon the threat of punishment to induce compliance or to offer positive incentives as well.<sup>27</sup> The answers selected define the shape the strategy will assume.

Broadly speaking, there are four variants of coercive diplomacy. First, there is the *ultimatum*—a specific demand, a time limit for compliance, and a credible threat of punishment in the event of noncompliance.<sup>28</sup> A state may choose to make the ultimatum “tacit,” by omitting either the time limit or the threat

of punishment (but not both). This method relies upon ambiguity to instill fear in its adversary (although this can backfire due to misunderstanding of the adversary’s perceptions).<sup>29</sup> There are a variety of dangers in making an

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*Now is not the best time to declare that the Arab states are either with the United States or against it in the war on terrorism by making Iraq the next target.*

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ultimatum, and most of them apply to Iraq. A poorly timed ultimatum can cause significant political backlash or provoke preemptive military action. An ultimatum that is a bluff might be called, forcing the “coercing” state either to initiate military action or back down. Finally, an adversary may respond with conditional or partial acceptance, prompting calls for negotiations or third-party mediation.<sup>30</sup> For all these reasons, ultimatums are not to be issued lightly, but some form of ultimatum is likely to be part of any effort to apply coercive diplomacy against Iraq.

The second variant of coercive diplomacy is the *try and see* approach—a specific demand is made with neither a time limit nor a stated threat. Instead, the coercing state engages in some form of demonstration in hopes that this alone will persuade compliance.<sup>31</sup> Because Saddam habitually ignores demands not backed by imminent and credible force, this method seems infeasible with Iraq.

The third variant of coercive diplomacy has been called a *gradual turning of the screw*. The coercing state sets forth specific demands but does not define a time limit for compliance. The coercing power hints that if its demands are not met, it will step up the pressure incrementally until they are.<sup>32</sup> The key to this approach is the concept of “escalation dominance,” the ability to increase the costs of noncompliance while rendering impotent the opponent’s ability either to sidestep those costs or counterescalate.<sup>33</sup> The turning-of-the-screw approach may be suitable against Iraq, provided that the United States is willing to take the

steps necessary to achieve escalation dominance and, if compliance does not occur by a certain point, issue an ultimatum.

The fourth variant of coercive diplomacy is the *carrot and stick* approach. Whereas the three variants above rely solely upon threats, this method requires receptivity to alternative methods. Not surprisingly, coercive diplomacy based solely upon threats requires a formidable stick, and it is often difficult to convey to an adversary the severity of possible consequences. Hence positive incentives for compliance may reduce the natural reluctance on the part of the adversary to comply. However, positive inducements and reassurances must be credible and truly attractive. In addition, because the target state could renege, it is essential that any inducements offered be either revocable or limited. “Carrots” would almost certainly play a role in coercive diplomacy against Iraq. The form they might take and whom within the Iraqi regime they would be intended to encourage will be discussed below.

Further, coercive diplomacy depends greatly upon context. Eight contextual dynamics that have an effect upon the application of coercive diplomacy in given scenarios have been outlined in the literature. These include the nature of the adversary’s provocation and the difficulties inherent in any attempt to stop or undo that provocation; the magnitude of asymmetries in motivation between the two sides; the images of the consequences of war on each side; the level of need (on the part of the coercing power) to resolve the issue by some specific date; the unilateral or coalition character of the effort; the presence or absence of strong political leadership on each side; the degree to which the adversary is isolated; and the coercing power’s preferred postcrisis relationship with the adversary.<sup>34</sup>

### *Advantages and Disadvantages*

One of the fundamental objectives of any American attempt to employ coercive diplomacy against Iraq would be to tilt global public relations back in its favor by demonstrating that its immediate objective is the unconditional implementation of SCR 687, which defined the terms of the Gulf War cease-fire in 1991 but has not yet been fully implemented.<sup>35</sup> This tactic would place the burden of shame for noncompliance back where it belongs, on Saddam’s regime. However, there are costs involved. For example, implementing SCR 687 would not necessarily achieve the overarching U.S. strategic objective in Iraq, the end of that state’s aggressive agenda. It would temporarily constrain Iraq’s capacity for aggression, but the root cause of the Iraqi state’s expansionism—Saddam Hussein himself—might remain. By the terms of SCR 687, once declared in compliance with the cease-fire obligations, Iraq would no longer be subject to UN monitoring; Saddam might then rebuild his capacity for aggression, unchallenged legally by the international community.



In addition, if the United States is to cloak itself in international legitimacy, the administration would do best to limit its demands to those mandated by the Security Council.<sup>36</sup> This means that it would be limited to enforcing existing resolutions, perhaps with modifications to strengthen the international community's ability to constrain future Iraqi aggression. Within these narrow confines it would be very difficult to pursue a regime change in Iraq, and the prospect of being forced to live with Saddam indefinitely is unappealing, given his propensity to treachery and deceit. However, there is a silver lining—the chances that he would agree to Security Council demands are low, and the likelihood of his actually making good on such an agreement is even lower. If the United States could obtain an indefinite mandate for immediate recourse to military force in the event of Iraqi noncompliance, the sacrifices necessary for international legitimacy would become more acceptable. Securing an open-ended mandate would be challenging but not impossible.

A further advantage of coercive diplomacy is its tendency to bolster the individual and collective resolve of policy makers by attaching their reputations to success. With their prestige on the line, leaders and governments are likely to be less ready to accept noncompliance or consider disengagement than generally was the case in the latter half of the 1990s. There is little reason to question the resolve of the Bush administration or of its British allies, but the behavior of other key states toward Iraq does not inspire similar confidence.

A final difficulty of applying coercive diplomacy is that the adversary's perception is important to success or failure. In general, three notions must dominate an adversary's thinking if coercive diplomacy is to be successful. First, the opponent must be convinced that a significant asymmetry of motivation in favor of the coercing power exists. Second, the adversary must be persuaded that there is little time in which to comply with the demands upon it. Third, the adversary must be in no doubt that the coercing power would follow through on its threats and that the consequences would be unacceptably severe.<sup>37</sup>

### CAN SADDAM'S REGIME BE COERCED?

To a certain degree, Saddam's regime, like any other, can be coerced. However, recent history shows that it is far from easy to influence Saddam Hussein's mental calculus in such a manner.

#### *Inside the Republic of Fear*

A single, overarching consideration drives Iraqi foreign policy—Saddam's quest to remain in power, with his dignity (at least in his own eyes) intact. Any distinction between his personal will and that of the Iraqi state is an exercise in



semantics. Therefore, if one seeks to coerce Saddam's regime, it is important to understand his psychological profile and the system it has led him to create.

Saddam Hussein is not irrational. Rather, as a psychologist argued in 1990, his record "reveals a judicious political calculator[,] . . . by no means irrational . . . but dangerous to the extreme." His outlook is dominated by a messianic vision of himself as "the great struggler" pursuing Iraq's "revolutionary destiny." In pursuit of this dream he is not constrained by conscience; "his only loyalty is to Saddam Hussein." Thus, "commitments and loyalty are matters of circumstance, and circumstances change." His willingness to use whatever force he deems necessary, including extreme brutality, even weapons of mass destruction, is part of an elaborate facade, the psychologist believed, masking a deep underlying insecurity driven by "a strong paranoid orientation." This conspiratorial mindset enables Saddam to believe himself surrounded by enemies and to

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*It would seem that unilateral action in Iraq should be the last resort, not the first.*

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overlook the extent to which he created them. "It is this political personality constellation—messianic ambition for unlimited power, absence of conscience,

unconstrained aggression, and a paranoid outlook—that makes Saddam so dangerous. Conceptualized as malignant narcissism, this is the personality configuration of the destructive charismatic who unifies and rallies his downtrodden supporters by blaming outside enemies."<sup>38</sup>

Though "psychologically in touch with reality," Saddam is often out of touch with it politically. His "narrow and distorted" outlook stems from his slight understanding of the world beyond Iraq and his tendency to surround himself with sycophants. Despite a propensity for shrouding his actions in religious rhetoric, the psychologist concluded, Saddam has no desire to be a martyr.<sup>39</sup>

The system Saddam Hussein has created is dominated by a single, precarious social premise—the preferential treatment of certain Sunni Arab tribes at the expense of the larger Shi'ite and Kurdish populations.<sup>40</sup> Because these Sunni tribes could do his regime great harm, Saddam goes to tremendous lengths to satisfy them. Prior to the Gulf War, this was not difficult, given Iraq's affluence.<sup>41</sup> In its aftermath, supporting living standards of the elite proved increasingly challenging until Saddam agreed to the UN "oil for food" program.

Saddam employs a variety of tactics to ward off potential competitors. First, he relies heavily upon nepotism. Second, he has created one of the most sinister and repressive police states in the world, with a multiplicity of security organs so as to ensure no single individual or organization becomes a threat to his primacy.<sup>42</sup> Third, the state-run media has generated a cult of personality around Saddam, portraying him as the savior of the Iraqi people. Fourth, echoing

Saddam's own conspiracy theories, the regime vigorously vilifies America and Israel, branding them as the true sources of the country's suffering.<sup>43</sup> This propaganda has arguably been more successful among non-Iraqis than with the Iraqi people themselves, as evidenced by Saddam's growing stature among the broader Arab and Palestinian publics.

### *The Successes and Failures of the 1990s*

Since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, the United States has been almost continuously obliged to induce Saddam to stop or undo one form of undesirable behavior or another.

*The Occupation of Kuwait (1990–91).* War with Iraq was by no means inevitable in August 1990. The international community's pressure upon Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait evolved gradually: on 2 August, SCR 660 demanded Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal; four days later SCR 661 froze Iraqi assets and put in place comprehensive economic sanctions until such time as Iraq withdrew; finally, SCR 678 of 29 November issued an ultimatum, demanding that Iraq withdraw no later than 15 January 1991 and authorizing after that date "all means necessary" to compel compliance.<sup>44</sup> Nearly every variation of coercive diplomacy was attempted, starting with the try-and-see method, then the gradual turning of the screw, and finally an ultimatum. Only the carrot-and-stick approach was never tried, largely because of an international consensus that, as President George Bush declared, there should be "no reward for aggression" and "appeasement does not work."<sup>45</sup>

Saddam's refusal to withdraw his forces before the 15 January deadline came as a surprise to many. A rational leader, it seemed, should have realized the precariousness of the situation and the risks of war, and bowed before the weight of international opinion. Yet Saddam was convinced that he should stand up to the United States and that Iraqi victory was by no means impossible.

Saddam's beliefs were not inherently irrational. First, he did not perceive U.S. motivation for liberating Kuwait as greater than his own for keeping it. If there was a differential in motivation, he believed, it worked in Iraq's favor. This perception was in part rooted in his messianic self-image, which told him that Kuwait was Iraq's just reward for defending the Arab world against Ayatollah Khomeini's militant Shi'ites during the 1980s. At the same time, Saddam doubted U.S. resolve; he believed that America would not risk a major war to restore Kuwait's independence.<sup>46</sup>

In any case, Saddam did not envision war with the United States as unwinnable. He was confident his forces could turn the Saudi-Kuwaiti border into a modern-day Flanders field, where American soldiers and Marines would die

by the thousands, and with them the will to fight of the supposedly irresolute American public.<sup>47</sup>

A third reason why Saddam failed to withdraw was his sense of pride, informed by cultural factors unique to the Arab world. "In the Arab world, having the courage to fight a superior foe can bring political victory, even through a military defeat." Hence, "intoxicated by the elixir of power and the acclaim of the Palestinians and the radical Arab masses, Saddam may well have been on a euphoric high and optimistically overestimated his chances for success."<sup>48</sup> Additionally, the dispute became highly personal to Saddam, a zero-sum struggle against an international conspiracy led by his hated rival, George Bush. These perceptions rendered ineffective what might have been thought a credible five-month attempt at coercive diplomacy.

*UN Weapons Inspectors and the Southern No-Fly Zone (1993).* In the weeks after the Gulf War, SCR 687 and 688 were adopted. The former spelled out the conditions imposed upon Iraq as a defeated power, while the latter demanded that Saddam's regime stop its brutal repression of Iraqi civilians. Baghdad at first acquiesced to UN weapons inspections; Iraqi weakness prevented defiance, and Saddam believed that token admissions and declarations would lead the inspectors to declare Iraq in compliance.<sup>49</sup> However, the inspectors remained in Iraq long beyond the time period originally envisioned, and the regime systematically changed its tactics from passive noncooperation to outright interference.

In early January 1993 the situation came to a head. Iraq refused to permit the inspectors access to two suspected nuclear facilities; additionally, Iraqi radar began tracking aircraft enforcing the southern no-fly zone. In response, on 13 January French, British, and American aircraft struck military targets in southern Iraq. The strikes brought a swift end to Iraq's interference with the no-fly zone, but the impasse over inspections continued. In an effort to convince Saddam that it meant business, on 17 January the Bush administration launched cruise missile attacks against the facilities the inspectors had been prevented from reaching. Two days later Iraq agreed to cooperate with the inspectors, and the crisis came to an end. The Iraqis had been successfully, if temporarily, coerced into adhering to their obligations under SCR 687.

Nonetheless, there was widespread condemnation of the cruise missile attack, which had caused the deaths of several Iraqi civilians. The French and Russians accused the United States of exceeding the scope of Security Council resolutions. Middle Eastern governments criticized the U.S. "policy of military escalation" and asked Washington to refrain from such attacks in the future, in order to forestall "erosion of favorable Arab public opinion."<sup>50</sup> Iraq had failed in its

attempt to defy the Security Council, but it had uncovered fragility within the once-strong anti-Iraq coalition.

*Saber Rattling on the Kuwaiti Border (1994).* On 5 October 1994, Iraq deployed two Republican Guard divisions along the Kuwaiti border, apparently to test the U.S. reaction. The United States threatened preemptive strikes unless the Iraqi forces withdrew. To convey a sense of urgency and increase already-substantial American combat power within the region, an aircraft carrier battle group and a Marine expeditionary unit were ordered into the Persian Gulf, and an Army mechanized brigade was deployed to Kuwait. Saddam withdrew his forces on 10 October. Five days later, Security Council Resolution 949 was adopted, establishing a “no-drive” zone along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border in order to prevent Saddam from threatening Kuwait in the future.<sup>51</sup>

Saddam’s motivation for the buildup had been twofold. First, at a time when his popularity in his Sunni power base was shrinking due to the privations caused by UN-imposed sanctions, he sought to demonstrate that his capacity to defy the United States was undiminished. Second, he wanted to test American resolve; had it been found wanting, he would, according to reports later obtained from high-ranking Iraqi defectors, have invaded again.<sup>52</sup> The speed and size of the American buildup apparently impressed Saddam, and his rapid back-down dealt his prestige a significant blow.

However, this was not a clear-cut victory for the United States, which, as in 1993, was again roundly berated by its regional partners for having “overreacted.” Domestically, the Clinton administration was at least mildly criticized for incurring the cost of transporting thousands of American personnel to the region on short notice and then not inflicting any punishment on Saddam’s regime for its provocative behavior. In fact, the administration had considered strikes against Iraqi forces but, remembering the outcry of January 1993, had concluded that the political costs would have been too high.<sup>53</sup>

*The Invasion of the Kurdish Safe Haven (1996).* Immediately after the Persian Gulf War, Iraqi Kurds rose in rebellion, taking advantage of the presumed weakness of the security forces to establish a Kurdish state in the northern part of the country. It was a miscalculation; the Iraqi army promptly crushed the uprising, reportedly killing thousands of Kurds. In April 1991 the United Nations established a protected Kurdish area north of the thirty-sixth parallel. On 29 August 1996 Iraqi forces invaded that haven to root out an umbrella group serving as the international voice of the Iraqi opposition. The move was not as daring as it appeared; Saddam had received evidence of American indifference to events in the Kurds’ territory. The Clinton administration had decided in March 1995 to withdraw promised support for a planned Iraqi opposition offensive, and it had

displayed indifference to escalations of Kurdish infighting. Saddam, for his part, had been emboldened by weathering a series of internal crises during 1995 and early 1996.<sup>54</sup> Sensing an opportunity to enhance further his now-burgeoning domestic prestige by invading what was widely perceived as an American protectorate, Saddam quickly seized upon it.

Confronted with what amounted to a *fait accompli* and enjoying no support from its allies, the United States had few options. Because Turkey—engaged in its own struggle against Kurdish separatism—was unwilling to allow its bases to be used in support of the Iraqi Kurds, the ability of the U.S. military to attack Saddam's forces in the safe haven was severely constrained. A similar rejection of force by several key Arab partners, including the Saudis, who forbade the use of their bases, further restricted the options available. In the end, the American response to the Iraqi incursion was limited to extending the southern no-fly zone northward from the thirty-second to the thirty-third parallel, and to delivering another series of cruise missile attacks. Fear of collateral damage drove target selection, which settled on air defense sites, the loss of which was of little consequence to the regime.

Nonetheless, Saddam withdrew his forces from the Kurdish haven, and with a speed that remains puzzling. Perhaps he believed that he had accomplished his principal objectives of neutralizing the opposition and bolstering his prestige at home, with the added achievement of driving a wedge between the United States and its European allies and Arab partners. Indeed, Saddam's 1996 invasion of the Kurdish safe haven has been called his "official comeback."<sup>55</sup> If it accomplished nothing else, it convinced the already vacillating Arab and European states that Saddam was not going away any time soon.

Accordingly, they faced a choice—to make amends with Saddam and work with him, or continue to back what they increasingly saw as a flawed strategy, managed by a now-preoccupied Clinton administration. Not surprisingly, given the economic stakes involved, the majority chose the former option. In the Security Council, understandings worked out with Saddam's regime by Russia, France, and China threatened to undermine the UN weapons inspection process. Seeing profits to be made if the sanctions were lifted, these countries lobbied for an end to inspections, despite convincing evidence of continued Iraqi deceit.

*Termination of UN Weapons Inspections (1997–98).* This collapse of the consensus in support of inspections encouraged the Iraqi regime to risk further defiance of the inspectors.<sup>56</sup> Refusals and obstructions escalated significantly in October 1997, when Iraq declared that seven American inspectors would be expelled and threatened to shoot down U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. An American

military buildup and a threat of preemptive strikes caused Saddam to back down, but two months later he precipitated another crisis by declaring his numerous presidential palaces off limits to inspections. The UN secretary-general

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*There is a way to break the impasse between the United States and a number of key states whose cooperation is critical.*

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stepped in at the eleventh hour to avert American air strikes, brokering a compromise that so relaxed the rules for inspections that the independence and integ-

rity of the disarmament process were severely undermined. In August 1998 Iraq announced its intention to prohibit inspections altogether, a threat it made good two months later. In November, confronted by the imminent prospect of major American and British air strikes with the unanimous support of the Security Council, Saddam again backed down. Again the inspectors returned to Iraq, only to be thwarted and obliged to leave once more.

Stung by domestic criticism of its Iraq policy, the Clinton administration responded in December 1998 with Operation DESERT FOX, an intense four-day bombing campaign against the Iraqi regime's intelligence and security forces, air defense systems, command and control sites, and selected production sites of weapons of mass destruction. Gratifying as the campaign may have been, it was too little, too late; the damage to the inspections program had already been done, and the strikes gave Saddam no new reason to cooperate. The inspectors have not at this writing returned to Iraq.

Certain positive developments did, however, result from the strikes. They seem to have caused turmoil within the regime, including a series of uprisings and possibly a coup attempt. This development, though it amounted to little at the time, may represent hope for the future—that even a failed U.S. attempt to coerce Saddam might convince internal elements to put an end to the suffering caused by his regime.<sup>57</sup>

#### *Saddam's Pressure Points: The Lessons of the 1990s*

American policy makers in the 1990s understood the location of Saddam Hussein's "center of gravity" but found no effective way to attack it.<sup>58</sup> Doing so would have required the prior accomplishment of two intermediate objectives: creating the incentive within Saddam's power base to end his rule, and threatening Saddam's ability to maintain his hold. The sanctions were intended to accomplish the first of these objectives, by creating discontent, but Saddam's willingness to maintain the preferential treatment of the elites, at whatever expense to the rest of the population, undermined their effectiveness. The second objective could be accomplished only by either destroying the regime's security forces militarily or conspiring with high-ranking figures to accomplish the

overthrow of Saddam. Both methods were attempted: the former proved difficult because Saddam habitually based his security forces in residential areas, to discourage strikes; the latter ended in utter failure when Iraqi intelligence uncovered a CIA-sponsored plot in 1996. Nonetheless, during DESERT FOX the United States accepted a risk of collateral damage and targeted the regime's security forces, with favorable results—albeit modest and short-lived.

Though American policy countered reasonably well Saddam's heavier-handed efforts to thwart containment, it had a difficult time "containing" the divergent goals of certain allies and strategic partners. That difficulty points to a U.S. center of gravity—the need for coalition—which Saddam should be expected to target. Not surprisingly, it has proven easier for him to lure coalition members away (with promises of financial gain) than it has for the United States to drive a wedge between Saddam and his domestic power base. The perspectives of the United States and its allies have differed from the outset. During the 1990 Gulf crisis and the ensuing war, for instance, there was little enthusiasm among the Arab states for deposing Saddam. Thus, these same states now disdain an American strategy designed to isolate Iraq indefinitely until the regime collapses, particularly when it punishes the helpless Iraqi populace for the sins of its dictator.

Finally, beginning with the George H. W. Bush administration, American policy makers have been unable to reconcile policy with objectives over the long term. Simply put, since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the overarching U.S. objective has been to rid the region of the threat of Iraqi aggression. The liberation of Kuwait and the imposition of SCR 687 contributed to this objective in only a single instance; nothing has yet removed the source of the problem, Saddam Hussein.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the United States has found itself forced to adopt short-term instruments, like weapons inspections, sanctions, a large American military presence, and support of dissident elements in hopes of inhibiting the Iraqi regime until the arrival of the post-Saddam era.

### A FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS

According to a Canadian diplomat, there is broad agreement within the UN that "Saddam may have played his cards wrong. Overall, patience with Iraq has pretty much run out."<sup>60</sup> This is particularly true in the Security Council, where during the last year the Chinese and French delegations reportedly have joined the United States and Britain to press for unconditional Iraqi compliance with SCR 687. Only Russia remains undecided, largely due to its financial ties to Baghdad, which involves over eight billion dollars in unpaid loans; a senior Iraqi official has warned that if sanctions continue, "Russian businessmen will be the first to be affected."<sup>61</sup> However, rather than intimidating the Russian government, this



imprudent Iraqi threat appears to have augmented Moscow's growing "post-9/11" ties with the United States. At the end of March 2002 Russian and American diplomats resolved a year-long standoff over "smart sanctions"—sanctions designed to have more impact upon the regime and less on the general Iraqi population—by permitting the passage of SCR 1409 in May.<sup>62</sup> Though at first glance SCR 1409's adoption of smart sanctions might appear a victory for Saddam, in truth it is at best a Pyrrhic one; for, with its passage, the United States has shifted the burden for the Iraqi people's suffering away from the UN and onto Saddam, thus effectively depriving Baghdad of its favorite ploy for rallying international support.

With this development, it is now possible for the United States to employ coercive diplomacy to once and for all bring about Iraqi compliance with SCR 687. For such an effort, the gradual turning-of-the-screw approach is most appropriate, with smart sanctions serving as a form of carrot (to engender not only allied cooperation, but also possibly the support of opposition within the Iraqi regime). To this end the United States must clearly convey to the Security Council's permanent members, its European allies, and regional partners that it cannot accept the possibility of an Iraqi atomic bomb, the likelihood of which grows as time passes; that it will not see the provisions of SCR 687 watered down; and that Iraqi compliance with all existing Security Council resolutions must be full and unconditional. Simultaneously, the United States must stress that this effort is not part of the broader war on terrorism but is entirely an attempt to prevent Saddam Hussein from further destabilizing an already precarious regional situation.

With its objectives established, a strategy based upon coercive diplomacy would then turn to creating a sense of urgency; vigorous pursuit of a four-to-six-month window (expiring no later than 1 March 2003) for restarting UN weapon inspections would serve that purpose. Such a time line is not unrealistic; the first UN inspection mission, in 1991, was on site within three months.<sup>63</sup> The next judgment would be whether the threat of punishment for noncompliance should be made explicit or left ambiguous. Clearly the United States need not indefinitely restrain itself should Iraq continue to refuse to cooperate. The point of coercive diplomacy would be to keep escalation in tension gradual and measured, so as to maintain international support and forestall situations requiring a large and inopportune military commitment. With the pattern established by the Security Council in the months preceding Operation DESERT STORM serving as a model, host-nation support for land-based forces is likely to be forthcoming if Iraq disregards a determined international consensus.

Of course, as the United States pressed a coercive-diplomacy strategy, Saddam Hussein would vigorously attempt to counter it. He would presumably

try to tie up proceedings in endless negotiations over trivial matters. Failing that, Saddam would likely promise cooperation with some form of inspection—promises that would be as disingenuous as the promises made throughout the 1990s. Saddam also might decide to take some form of preemptive action; the counter to this prospect is not only a rapid buildup of forces sufficient to respond quickly if Iraqi preemption occurs or preparations for it are discovered, but also an increased emphasis upon homeland security geared toward thwarting a potential wave of Iraqi state-sponsored terrorism.

Essentially, coercive diplomacy would offer Saddam one final chance, failing which the United States would be free to pursue its primary objective of regime change, with the authorization of the Security Council. If by postponing unilateral action and attempting coercive diplomacy a regional consensus can be restored, the moral burden can finally be shifted away from America and its allies and partners and back to where it belongs—on Saddam's regime. The United States would reap substantial benefit, for if coercive diplomacy fails to produce an international consensus, the administration can always return to a unilateralist approach in time to conduct an invasion sometime after 1 March 2003, while the weather is still favorable for sustained military operations. Thus the United States has a great deal to win and nothing to lose by attempting coercive diplomacy.

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#### NOTES

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3. A growing circle in the American government rejects the notion that the United States is the principal source of the region's problems. See Martin Indyk, "Back to the Bazaar," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2002, p. 86; and Strategic Forecasting Services, "Instability on Horizon as Arab Regimes Remain Indecisive," 12 March 2002, available online at [http://www.stratfor.com/standard/analysis\\_view.php?ID=203448](http://www.stratfor.com/standard/analysis_view.php?ID=203448) (accessed on 12 March 2002).
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5. For a wealth of sources on Iraq's clandestine weapons programs, see the Nuclear Control Institute's Website on Iraq, <http://www.nci.org/sadb.htm> (3 April 2002).
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  8. Saddam was bitterly opposed to SCR 986 when it was first approved in 1995. See David Wurmser, *Tyranny's Ally* (Washington, D.C.: America Enterprise Institute Press, 1999), pp. 17–20; and Patrick Clawson, "Oil for Food or the End of Sanctions?" *Washington Institute for Near East Policy Watch* (February 1998).
  9. As of December 2001, almost sixty-two thousand members of the National Guard and the reserves had been activated in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM; for a breakdown, see *Defenselink*, at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec2001/d20011226ngr.pdf> (18 April 2002), and the White House Website, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/march11/campaignagainstterrorism.pdf> (18 April 2002).
  10. General Tommy Franks [U.S. Army], interview by Tim Russert, *Meet the Press*, NBC News, 24 March 2002.
  11. For dividends of cooperation with Pakistan and the Philippines, see Karl Vick and Kamran Khan, "Raid Netted Top Operative of Al Qaeda," *Washington Post*, 2 April 2002, p. A1; and Bradley Graham, "Rebel Leader in Philippines Presumed Dead," *Washington Post*, 22 June 2002, p. A15.
  12. For the intentions of moderate Arab leaders at the Arab League summit, see Howard Schneider, "Arab Leaders Divided," *Washington Post*, 27 March 2002, p. A1; Sam F. Ghattas, "Arab Leaders Endorse Saudi Peace Plan," *Washington Post*, 28 March 2002 (electronic edition); and "Mubarak Stayed Away from Summit in Solidarity with Arafat," *Associated Press*, 27 March 2002 (electronic edition).
  13. For the view of a former ambassador to Israel, see Martin Indyk, "Back to the Bazaar"; and "A Poor Change of Subject," *Washington Post*, 28 March 2002, p. A28.
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31. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
32. *Ibid.*
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52. "Hussein Kamil on Army Strength, Saddam Fedayeen," *al-Watan al-Arabi*, in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service—Near East and South Asia* (FBIS-NES-95-227), 27 November 1995, p. 33.
53. Byman and Waxman, *Confronting Iraq*, p. 58.
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56. The standoffs would probably have happened sooner but for the defection of Hussein Kamel. See Tim Trevan, *Saddam's Secrets* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), pp. 324–45.
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60. Barbara Crossette, "Iraqis Will Face Blunt Terms in Weapons Talks at the U.N.," *New York Times*, 6 March 2002 (electronic edition).
61. Serge Schmemmann and Patrick E. Tyler, "Iraq Proposes U.N. Talks, and Gets a Wary Reply," *New York Times*, 5 February 2002 (electronic edition).
62. For the "smart sanctions" approach, see Peter Baker, "U.S. and Russia Agree to Overhaul Sanctions on Iraq," *Washington Post*, 29 March 2002, p. A20; and Somini Sengupta, "U.S. Broadens List of Products Iraq Can Import," *New York Times*, 15 May 2002, p. A1.
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## MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ IS JUSTIFIED

Robert F. Turner

A controversial issue now in the news is whether under international law, it would be lawful for the United States, either alone or as a member of an international coalition, to use lethal force against Saddam Hussein personally or against Iraq.

Under international law lethal force can never be used unless it is necessary and proportional. If nonviolent remedies are available that can protect a nation's

*Robert F. Turner holds both professional and academic doctorates from the University of Virginia School of Law. Dr. Turner is co-founder and associate director of the Center for National Security Law except for two periods of government service in the 1980s and 1994–95 when he occupied the Charles H. Stockton Chair of International Law at the U.S. Naval War College. A veteran of two Army tours in Vietnam, he served as a research associate and public affairs fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace. He has served as a security advisor to Senator Robert P. Griffin, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; in the Pentagon as special assistant to the under secretary of defense for policy; in the White House as counsel to the President's Intelligence Oversight Board; at the State Department as principal deputy assistant secretary for legislative affairs, and as the first president of the congressionally established United States Institute of Peace. Dr. Turner is the author or editor of a dozen books and monographs, and numerous articles in law reviews and professional journals.*

rights, they must be pursued. Force cannot be used to resolve traditional political or economic grievances. It is permitted only when necessary to protect against the threat or use of unlawful force. Thus the key issue here is whether Iraq's current regime constitutes a threat to the peace against the United States or other countries.

Saddam Hussein is truly unique. He is the only living head of state who has been denounced as an aggressor by the United Nations Security Council, for his attacks on Iran and Kuwait. He is the only head of state who has clearly used illegal weapons of mass destruction against his neighbors, and even against his own citizens. He is one of the few national leaders to have provided widespread support for international terrorism, including plots to murder a former president of the United States. In further violation of Security Council resolutions, Saddam has never

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even pretended to denounce terrorism as a tool of international intercourse. He continues to encourage, incite, and support terrorism against Israel to this day.

Now that the Taliban has been removed from the political scene, at this writing Saddam stands alone in his long-standing refusal to comply with numerous UN Security Council resolutions, which demand that he allow international inspections of Iraq to determine if he is continuing to develop weapons of mass destruction. These resolutions are the result of Saddam's documented efforts to acquire such weapons, his unlawful use of these weapons, his history as a major international aggressor, and his frequent threats to use such weapons against other states. The purpose of the United Nations, set forth in Article 1 of its charter, is "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace." The Security Council has made it clear that Saddam is a major threat to international peace and security.

At the San Francisco Conference of 1945, which produced the UN Charter, the committee that drafted Article 2 expressly stated that "the use of arms in legitimate self-defense remains admitted and unimpaired" by the charter. Indeed, the right of individual and collective self-defense was viewed by many as among the most important provisions of the charter. Senator Arthur Vandenberg, chairman of the committee that drafted Article 51,\* governing self-defense, later told the Senate, "If the omission [of the right of collective self-defense] had not been rectified there would have been no Charter. It was rectified, finally, after infinite travail, by agreement upon Article 51 of the Charter. Nothing in the Charter is of greater immediate importance and nothing in the Charter is of equal potential importance."

In a 1949 speech to the Inter-American Bar Association, Senator Vandenberg emphasized that the fact that Security Council action could be blocked by a veto was a major factor in the decision to adopt Article 51. "If the Security Council fails to act—or is stopped from acting, for example, by a veto—Article 51 continues to confound aggression. The United Nations is thus saved from final impotence. So is righteous peace."

Historically, the United States has taken the view that the right of self-defense is implicit in every treaty and cannot be taken away. Thus when the international

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\* Article 51: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of the individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."



community sought, in the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Treaty, to outlaw the use of force as an instrument of policy, several states expressed an intention to include a reservation preserving their right to use force in self-defense. The United States responded by sending a diplomatic note to foreign offices around the world stating that it “believes that the right of self-defense is inherent in every sovereign State and implicit in every treaty. No specific reference to that inalienable attribute of sovereignty is therefore necessary or desirable.” Early on in the Kellogg-Briand negotiations, the United States also argued, “Every nation is free at all times and regardless of treaty provisions to defend its territory from attack or invasion and it alone is competent to decide whether circumstances require recourse to war in self-defense.”

There was a time when the “better view” thought it preferable that the aggressor actually strike the first blow. Only when a neighbor’s first platoon crossed the border and attacked could a state defend itself. There is a controversial doctrine in international law called “anticipatory self-defense,” holding that a state clearly about to be attacked need not willingly suffer the first blow when the evidence of attack is overwhelming. A classic example of this doctrine was Israel’s decision to strike first when the armies of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria massed on its borders in June 1967. I share the view that Israel was lawfully defending itself against an imminent attack.

What, however, if international law permitted countries to attack first on allegations alone? Would that not provide a legal loophole to mask aggression? It is an understandable concern, but one I believe to be no greater than what we face with false allegations of grounds for traditional self-defense. When Adolf Hitler invaded Poland, he alleged that Germany was attacked first. In 1950, Kim Il Sung alleged that South Korea had invaded the North and that he was acting in self-defense. The world saw through both lies.

Tyrants are still likely to lie, but the world can still pass judgment. Kuwait is neither going to invade Iraq nor mass its forces on its borders in preparation for invasion. The legal presumption must be strongly against anticipatory self-defense. However, in a setting like that of the Middle East in 1967, a victim of imminent aggression should not be forced to absorb the first blow. I submit the same holds true when a “repeat offender” like Saddam flagrantly rebels against Security Council resolutions in preparation for aggression.

This is all the more important in an age when the first attack could involve the slaughter of literally millions of innocent people. There is not the slightest reason why Saddam Hussein should be permitted a “free kick” with weapons of mass destruction against the United States or any other peace-loving country. He faces no present military threat that is not directly tied to his violation of Security Council resolutions, a fact that supports the conclusion that he intends to

use such weapons again. Article 25 of the UN Charter requires that all members “accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.” What Saddam is doing is illegal and threatens the security of the United States and the world community.

Following Iraq’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the Security Council passed Resolution 660, demanding Iraq’s immediate withdrawal. Saddam ignored the resolution and continued to rape and pillage Kuwait. Resolution 678, which the Security Council has repeatedly emphasized has never been repealed, authorizes the use of lethal force against Iraq if Saddam’s forces were not withdrawn by 15 January 1991. Saddam finally agreed to the conditions of Security Council Resolution 678, which included permitting UN weapons inspectors to monitor the termination of his weapons of mass destruction programs, but then he reneged on his promise. In my view, until Saddam fulfills the terms of the cease-fire agreement, Resolution 678 remains in force and Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and to the security of all states. Since 1990 the Security Council has passed no fewer than sixty resolutions dealing with Iraq. If the Security Council lacks the courage to uphold the Charter, enforce its edicts, and protect international peace and security after recognizing the existing threat that Saddam poses to the world community, the states that are threatened by his unlawful behavior have a right to protect themselves.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, the great Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu wrote in the *Art of War*, “To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.” I share Sun Tzu’s view.

I hope that Saddam Hussein has seen what has happened to his friends in al-Qa‘ida and will now find it in his best interest to comply. However, if he does not, and the Security Council proves to be impotent, I believe it will be both legal and in the interest of world peace for the United States to work with other nations to remove Saddam from power.

## IT IS TIME TO TEMPER OUR EXCESSIVE INTERVENTIONISM

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*Doug Bandow*

Now, a year after the defining moment of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, is an appropriate time to think critically about strategy. One reason is that strategy is critically important. Strategy ultimately determines force structure, deployments, and commitments around the world. It ultimately determines the entire military posture.

Up until about 1914, the United States was a fairly aggressive power, internally and in the Pacific, for trade reasons. It was not terribly interested, however, in the struggles in the Old World, particularly Europe. That changed in World War I, but after that conflict the United States went back to the pattern of a century before, until 1941. After 1941, through World War II and the Cold War, the United States successively fought three hegemonic powers—Nazi Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union. By the end of the Cold War the United States had eliminated all countervailing hegemons; it is necessary to go back not just to the British Empire but to the Roman Empire to find another time when one power so dominated the globe.

*Doug Bandow is a senior fellow of the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C. Mr. Bandow earned a J.D. degree at Stanford University. He served as a special assistant to President Ronald Reagan and has edited the journal Inquiry. Among his recent publications is Fighting the War against Terrorism: Elite Forces, Yes, Conscripts No (Cato Analysis 314). He is a widely syndicated newspaper columnist, a frequent contributor to leading periodicals, and a lecturer.*

At a conference at West Point a number of years ago, a member of the audience stood up and said, “I’m tired of this talk about a post–Cold War world. It is still a very dangerous place.” Yes, but dangerous to whom? It is dangerous to many countries, but not to the United States. That fact is the most important reason why this country should rethink its strategy. The U.S. military accounts for roughly a third of military outlay around the globe; adding the spending of

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friends and allies makes the figure 70 to 80 percent. The United States spends as much on defense as the next six or seven countries together, most of whom are friends and allies. Its force is the most technologically advanced, the most effective. The Europeans were rather embarrassed about this in the aftermath of the Kosovo War; the common estimate was that they had 10 to 15 percent of the effective combat capability of the United States.

The threats, however, are very different from what they once were. There remains a nuclear threat from the Russians—steadily diminishing in light of the improving relationship with Moscow and recent arms control agreements. Otherwise, the most obvious potential future threats come from China and India—if India decides to develop an intercontinental capability—and from third-world states. The United States certainly can deter the Russians, the Chinese, and the Indians. National missile defense is very useful against rogue states or inadvertent launches by more responsible powers. As for serious conventional threats to the United States—as serious as a Nato–Warsaw Pact conflagration would have been—they are much harder to find. Such threats as exist are primarily to American allies, and not in Europe; the most important involve the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. Further, these potential conflicts are not tied to a hegemonic opponent, as they once were. Threats to allies in the Cold War were related to the Soviet Union and had very different international implications than those of today.

The world is full of civil conflict, guerrilla warfare, and disorder of all sorts. But most of it has very little impact on American security. Most of these embroilments, to the extent they bother anyone, affect not the United States but its allies—and these allies are generally capable of handling the consequences, be it Indonesia and Australia, or the Balkans and Europe. Finally, the United States faces the threat of terrorism made so evident in the attacks of 11 September 2001, but terrorism is not something that is easily dealt with by conventional or nuclear forces. It may grow in the future, but it is a different kind of problem, one that will require different forces and responses.

Today's world, then, marked by American dominance and asymmetric threats, is not the same as that of the Cold War. Yet the United States persists in its Cold War posture, the costs of which dramatically exceed its benefits. One expense is budgetary, the price of an expansive foreign policy. There is also a broader economic burden—the country spends a far larger share of its gross domestic product on the military than do its allies and competitors. Further, the posture brings with it a substantial risk of conflict. American security guarantees can make any particular war less likely, but they ensure that the United States will be involved in any that does break out. In a world without an antagonistic hegemon, such conflicts rarely warrant American intervention. Another price is paid by those in uniform. They carry the burden of constant

deployments on behalf of dubious causes, a prospect that has hurt recruiting and retention. Moreover, there is the risk to life. In the next conflict, the United States might not be as lucky as it was in the Persian Gulf and Kosovo, and as it has been so far in Afghanistan.

Finally, the American homeland itself is at risk. States and groups that cannot confront a superpower in traditional ways resort to terrorism as a form of asymmetrical warfare. The attorney general has repeatedly warned that more terrorist incidents are likely, and the secretary of defense predicts that terrorists will eventually acquire biological, chemical, and perhaps nuclear weapons. If both

are right, the result will be too horrific to contemplate.

Today's changed world, then, calls for fairly significant changes in America's strategy. For example, the United States should not

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*The United States should remain in the background, acting not as an instant meddler but as the ultimate balancer.*

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treat, as did the so-called Nye Report, a hundred thousand troops in Asia as a "down payment" on a permanent American commitment. It is also not necessary for the United States to remain a dominant member of Nato, with forces on the ground in Europe. With a more appropriate strategy the United States would remain the primary power, the strongest country, but it would not require the vast advantage that it has today, or military involvement around the world.

The underpinnings of a more restrained and unilateral approach would be twofold. One is a philosophical notion regarding the primary responsibility of the U.S. government and, by extension, its role in the world. The principal duty of the U.S. government is to protect the lives, liberties, property, constitutional system, and freedom of the American people—including service members that it commits abroad. The lives of the peoples of other nations, whether of allies or of states in need of help, are important, but the U.S. government does not bear the same responsibility for them. Second, there is a practical concern that should underlie U.S. foreign policy—humility. There is a danger of falling into a hubristic notion that the United States can and should reorder the globe. It is a fatal conceit that one can sit in Washington and decide which faction should win a civil war in the Balkans, what kind of government should emerge in Afghanistan, which groups should live together, and where national borders should run.

It is not at all obvious what is right in such cases. It is also becoming increasingly clear that Washington cannot lastingly enforce its will even when it thinks it does know. Unintended consequences are often deep and long lasting. In the Balkans and Middle East can be seen problems caused at least in part by past U.S. actions, and further complications are likely to result in the future. In addition, incentives are important. If populous and prosperous allies are defended by

others, they probably will not devote as much effort to defend themselves. The effect can be seen in Europe, where a serious debate has emerged between those who argue for a stronger defense capability and others who do not want to spend the money that would be necessary. The same phenomenon is evident also in the Philippines and South Korea.

The policy of defending countries having adversarial relations with their neighbors may affect their behavior in dangerous ways. It may encourage them to adopt riskier strategies. Pakistan may well be emboldened in its running dispute with India by its close relationship with the United States in the campaign against al-Qa'ida and Taliban terrorists on its northern border. By issuing a defense guarantee to Taiwan, Washington may influence Taiwanese decisions about declaring independence over the long term. When the United States backs ethnic separatists, as in Kosovo, with airpower, it should not be surprised if the guerrillas expand their activities. Similarly, the Philippines government has clearly seen its visiting-forces agreement with Washington as a factor in its struggle with China over the Spratly Islands. Such guarantees, or perceived guarantees, may have very important and counterproductive effects; they may draw the United States in where it otherwise would not be involved.

Finally, policies that are perceived as aggressively interventionist may catalyze an opposing coalition. For example, the William Clinton administration was correct in trying to better its relations with India; there had been a debate in India on nuclear weapons policy, in which the hawks wanted an arsenal of several hundred weapons—with an intercontinental capability. The intent was not aggressive, though the implied target was obvious; the idea reflected a reaction to what is perceived as American arrogance. Indeed, the lesson that the chief of staff of the Indian army reportedly drew from the Persian Gulf War was that no nation should go to war with the United States without nuclear weapons. Even the French complain about the United States as a “hyperpower.” Such reactions should be taken into account in developing foreign policy.

What strategy would reflect the reality of America's dominant global presence as well as these two principles, philosophical and practical?

One of the realities is that the United States has the largest, most productive, most technologically advanced economy on earth. That will not change. America is the center of global culture. That is not always beneficial, but it certainly gives the United States enormous influence. People in some of the most remote places on the planet can be found wearing baseball caps, T-shirts, and shorts—all with logos of American companies. The reach of American “soft power” is extraordinary. Further, the United States has an attractive ideology, an

asset that clearly played a role in undermining communism in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

Having amassed such enormous advantages—quite aside from military pre-dominance—the United States could afford a less overwhelming primacy than it has today. Such a policy would be less expensive and less likely to incur risks that, as the events of 11 September demonstrated, can reach the U.S. homeland. Under a less interventionist policy, Washington would treat world events with a certain distance and detachment, asking not only “What?” but “So what?” The answer may very well be *nothing*. A State Department spokesperson commenting upon a dire event in a distant country—for example, a coup d’état—need simply acknowledge, “It is very sad, but there is nothing we can do about it, nothing that we need to do about it.” The United States should be prepared to ignore, or give only limited attention to, the largely irrelevant conflicts and instability of which the globe is full. It should accept the fact that the world will always have instability—guerrilla warfare, civil conflict, ethnic insurgency, and state failure—and that the United States does not have to try to deal with it all.

The media must not be allowed to direct national policy. Other countries know that CNN, for instance, plays a role in high-level decision making. In 1998, one of the aides to Ibrahim Rugova, the top ethnic Albanian leader, told the author, “We want Nato to get involved. That means we have got to bring the war into the homes of Americans. That means we have got to get on CNN.” Submitting to such manipulation is a very poor way to make policy. Many of these local conflicts are tragic, but they do not implicate vital American interests. It may be advisable to provide logistical support to countries or organizations that do want to get involved—the British in Sierra Leone, France and some of the Francophone countries in Africa, the African Union (replacing the Organization of African Unity), the United Nations. But beyond such narrow involvement, a superpower has, frankly, bigger fish to fry. It was one thing to try to stop bloodshed in Bosnia, for instance; it was quite another to create an artificial state and try to induce three warring parties to live together. The latter was an example of overreach that made no sense from an American standpoint.

The United States should also—and this is very fundamental—expect allies to protect allied interests. Since the Cold War, threats have receded to a level commensurate with the capabilities of allies to deal with them, especially if friendly states felt the slightest pressure to do more on their own behalf. As noted, most of the potential conventional threats around the world are against allies, not the United States; they should take the lead in protecting themselves. If, for example, the Baltic states are to be defended, the European Union should do it. Indeed, at a time when the European Union has a population greater than, and an economy equal to, those of the United States, and when France, Great



Britain, and Germany each spend about as much as the Russians spend on their militaries, there is no need for the United States to continue defending the Europeans. The guarantees given during the Cold War made sense then, but they are not necessary today.

The same calculus applies in Asia. It was correct for the United States to decline to involve itself in a major way in East Timor; that was Australia's problem. The Republic of Korea, with a gross domestic product forty times that of its northern neighbor and twice the population, should expect to defend itself, instead of relying on American backup, fifty years after the initial U.S. deployment. Japan too, despite the disquiet of its neighbors, can do far more to defend itself and its region. Where allies are capable of defending themselves, U.S. commitments to them can be changed.

Perhaps the most likely future threat facing the United States is China, which is the only potential peer competitor. The approach there should be, first, to en-

courage allies to take the steps necessary to defend themselves. Allies should be encouraged to work together; cooperation between countries like Japan and the Republic of Korea, for instance,

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*The United States has the largest, most productive, most technologically advanced economy on earth. That will not change.*

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needs to improve. Countries like the Philippines need naval and air forces capable of dealing with issues in the South China Sea. Also, countervailing powers should be cultivated. India, for example, is a potential counterweight to China. It is already fulfilling that role in Southeast Asia, in Burma, and in other countries. That is very useful. Third, the United States should trade with the Chinese but control trade in strategic commodities. The relationship with Beijing will not be an easy one; nonetheless, it does not require maintenance of the kind of expensive dominance that the United States has today.

The United States, then, should remain in the background, acting not as an instant meddler but as the ultimate balancer. The long-term goal is to see that immediate threats are handled by allies in the region, that Americans are not called in to deal with local instabilities that are likely to stay in the region. The United States should focus on the big issues—defending the United States, especially its homeland, and preventing the rise of another hegemonic power that would dominate Europe or Asia, as well as confronting the ongoing danger of terrorism.

When it is necessary to act, the United States should be creative. There may well be steps available short of military action. Consider North Korea. Dealing with the North Koreans is difficult; they should certainly be discouraged from becoming a nuclear power. But the ultimate disposition of the peninsula should

be viewed as a chess endgame—one in which the United States has already gained a winning advantage. There is no need for a dramatic, dangerous confrontation. It is necessary only to let the game play out—even, if necessary, with bribes (such as the nuclear-framework accord), which are cheaper than the alternative.

If strategy is adjusted in such ways, it will ultimately be necessary to adjust force structure and deployments as well, especially overseas. Commitments to defend other countries should be replaced with looser cooperative arrangements. There should be fewer deployments, and none in places like the Balkans. Over the long term it will also be necessary to look at transformational issues: informational and asymmetrical warfare, the likely parameters of future conflicts, and how to deal with attempts to exploit American vulnerabilities.

The world is a messy place. It is always going to be messy. Not all of its messes can be cleaned up, and the United States should not try. The United States can and should remain the strongest power on earth, but no longer with the kind of overwhelming power and ubiquitous international involvement that it has today. There are obviously risks in such a course, but there are also risks in trying to impose its will everywhere. There are risks in trying to settle civil wars. There are risks in becoming a party to other countries' disputes. One set of risks has to be balanced against the other. A less interventionist strategy would build on the existing advantages of the United States and offer the nation a better and safer future. It would ultimately give the American people, who fought and won the Cold War, the benefits of victory that they deserve.

## THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

### Reading Military Texts from a Different Perspective

*Lieutenant Colonel Phillip J. Ridderhof, U.S. Marine Corps*

Persuasive in peace, decisive in war, preeminent in any form of combat—with these goals in mind, and constantly using such terms as “full-dimensional,” “full spectrum,” “dominant,” and “dominance,” the Joint Staff white paper *Joint Vision 2010* and its extension *Joint Vision 2020* paint a picture of where U.S. military forces should head as they move into the twenty-first century.<sup>1</sup> “Vision” papers of individual services, such as *Marine Corps Strategy 21*, follow the lead of the joint documents in their proclamations of capabilities within specific competencies. The claims are bold indeed; these vision documents declare that the U.S. military will be able to go everywhere and do everything. Realistically, that is not possible, but a reader is hard pressed to discern from the language of the texts that hard choices have been made, significant alternatives rejected. There seems to be a sentence or phrase to cover every eventuality of future conflict. This, of course, gives the sense that the vision statements are pabulum, saying nothing by saying everything.

That, however, is an unfortunate and inaccurate impression. The vision documents are in fact more nuanced than they appear. But how can we get at their full meaning? One way to explicate vision documents is to adapt “deconstruction,” a technique of reading that arose as a postmodernist philosophical school. To “deconstruct” a text is to use perspectives, and viewpoints that are, ideally,

useful for understanding. Through this approach, attentive readers can examine even U.S. military “vision documents,” clarify their content, and develop implicit alternatives to their central themes. After briefly outlining the technique, we will apply it to two current case studies.

*Lieutenant Colonel Ridderhof is currently assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps. An infantry officer, he is a graduate of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College and the School of Advanced Warfighting.*

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## DECONSTRUCTION AND THE VISION TEXT

Broadly defined, deconstruction is a postmodern philosophy that denies the existence of objectively true meaning of texts. A “text” in this connection is anything that can be intellectually analyzed—a book, a film, even an activity. Deconstructionists argue that a given text has no single, independent “true” meaning established by the author but a variety of meanings that are totally dependent on the reader’s perspective and that continually interact in different ways.

To “deconstruct” a text is to analyze it so as to discern not its putative central themes but those that are marginalized and left unsaid. A philosophical, literary, or academic deconstructionist goes farther, declaring these marginal and unspoken themes to be in fact the text’s central meanings. By thus turning the text on its head, this method, taken to its logical conclusion, destroys the distinction between central and marginal meanings; for a deconstructionist there are merely *different* meanings, with arbitrary prioritization.<sup>2</sup> While useful analysis of military vision documents by this method requires a retreat from deconstruction’s nihilistic extremes, much can be learned through this form of “thinking out of the box.”

To get at marginal and “unsaid” themes, the first step is to identify clearly the central ones. In this connection, *how* something is said is as important as *what* is said. Military vision documents are written in the active voice, with strong verbs and modifiers. Central ideas can be identified by the repetition of words or phrases, especially as section titles, displayed quotations, graphics, or topic sentences of paragraphs. The organization of the text also points to central ideas. Vision documents tend to be put together in two ways: addressing the main point first and following with supporting material, and building up the supporting material into an argument that climaxes with the main point. Both patterns can be used simultaneously at different levels. For example, the overall structure of the text may be that of an argument building to a conclusion, while individual subsections are structured as main ideas followed by discussion. The central themes can be picked out fairly easily, by noting the repetition of certain phrases, examining the patterns of the writing, and discerning the placement of ideas within the patterns.

The central ideas of military vision texts can be divided into three conceptual parts: foundation, end state, and method. A *foundation*, the starting point for a vision statement, has two parts. One is an articulation of assumptions about the future security environment. These assumptions can have inwardly focused aspects (such as future U.S. national goals, interests, and policies) and outwardly oriented ones (directions of technological development, potential adversaries of the future). The second part of the foundation is a depiction of the present state of the organization. This description can consist of capabilities or current

employment concepts, but it usually focuses on character traits—the heritage and “enduring values” that represent the spirit of the organization. The *end state* sets forth the ultimate goal—in a sense, the “vision” itself. The end-state discussion describes the specific organizations, capabilities, and operational concepts that the military will need in order to cope with the future that has been portrayed. The end state, usually somewhat vague, focuses on concepts and capabilities rather than actual unit structures or hardware systems. The *method* is the “how” portion of the document—the path the service will take to proceed from the present force (described in the foundation) to that envisioned by the end state. The method is usually couched in terms of attitudes toward change and the relative importance of various aspects of expected change.

Central ideas may be repeated throughout the foundation, end-state, and method sections of the text. For instance, certain portions of the foundation discussion might be reiterated in the end-state portion in order to highlight the end state’s logic by reconnecting it to its premises. Likewise, the end state will probably be addressed in the method portion in order to emphasize the linkage between the two. This repetition makes the central ideas mutually supportive and readily identifiable.

Marginal ideas are secondary to the central ones, but they appear in the text and may even be repeated. Sometimes the only noticeable differences between main and subsidiary points are slight shades of meaning or emphasis. Close examination of the structure of the text and alertness to the use of certain grammatical devices are crucial in determining which themes are subsidiary. For instance, secondary points are usually referred to in caveats, or qualifiers, to central points; phrases such as “While *X* can never be discounted” and “Also important is *X*” are clues that *X* is a marginal idea. The sequence in which ideas are discussed and the relative strength of the modifiers (adjectives or adverbs) applied to them are also indicative of what is primary and what is not. Points referred to in a long list of disparate items, seemingly “tacked on” at the end of a section of text, are likely to be of lesser priority.

If marginal ideas are those that the author considered barely important enough to mention, the “unsaid” points, the “possibilities left out,” are those either thought not important enough to mention, or important *not* to mention, or not even thought of by the author. In any case—that which “goes without saying,” that which is “better left unsaid,” or that which was not recognized—this is an awkward concept to explain. Two techniques will help discern the possibilities that are implicit but left out: inferring the opposite of certain central ideas (especially in the foundation section) and elevating marginal ideas to central importance. The development of possibilities left out, however, is inevitably fraught with risk. For example, a discussion of central ideas dependent on new

technology is likely to omit mention of the possibility that technological progress may stop; to identify it (simply because it is theoretically possible) as an unsaid idea, however, is not realistic or analytically very useful. Nonetheless, this deconstruction technique can reveal possibilities that, if not probable or congenial, are worth consideration.

The last step of deconstruction is synthesis. A text has by now been broken into three categories: the central, marginal, and unsaid themes. While the central themes embody the main thrust of what the text actually said, a study of the marginal and omitted ideas may be more fruitful and enlightening. All three categories, however, should be examined together, to see what synthesis they inspire—ideas that will represent the payoff from the labor of deconstruction.

### *JV 2010 AND JV 2020*

Of the U.S. military vision documents now published, *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* are the most appropriate for a first demonstration of deconstruction-based analysis, because they address U.S. military power as a whole. Service-level visions, in contrast, intentionally marginalize and leave out important possibilities in order to observe the boundaries of service roles. Further, service visions should also fit under the conceptual umbrella of *JV 2010* and *JV 2020*; deconstructing the joint texts first should lay the necessary groundwork for examination of the service visions.

*Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* must be considered not as two documents but as one, divided into two parts. *JV 2020* is the more current, but it is an addendum or extension of *JV 2010* rather than a stand-alone document. It relies on *JV 2010*'s foundation; in fact, the end-state section of *JV 2010*—a vision of the force in 2010—is part of the foundation of *JV 2020*. Analyzing the two texts as a single whole allows a more complete listing of marginal ideas and left-out possibilities. As will be seen, though, some of the more interesting points to be gleaned arise from the doctrinal changes that appear in *JV 2020*.

The foundation of *Joint Vision 2010* postulates a future of evolutionary change, wherein U.S. interests and strategy do not significantly change. Military technology will be decisive and will continue to advance along its present lines, producing more precision and mobility, and also, most importantly, a vast increase in information available to forces, about both themselves and the enemy. The international environment also will present, in the *JV 2010* vision, a continuation of current trends; there will accordingly be uncertainty, and the United States will have to be prepared to deal simultaneously with a wide range of state and nonstate adversaries. *Joint Vision 2010* assumes that the United States will hold to its present policies of ensuring security for its people and possessions and of promoting domestic prosperity and worldwide democracy. The U.S.

military will continue to be primarily a warfighting organization, characterized by highly professional personnel and technological superiority; it will not, however, see a large increase in resources made available to it (*JV 2010*, pages 1–34).<sup>3</sup>

The *JV 2020* foundation is the same, with one important exception—that due to the rapid pace of worldwide change, U.S. forces cannot assume that they will enjoy technological superiority in all conflicts. In particular, asymmetrical options may be available to foes that could neutralize technological advantages (*JV 2020*, pages 1–45).

The end states envisaged by *JV 2010* and *JV 2020* are basically the same. In both documents the U.S. military of the future will be a warfighting force that is small, protected, mobile, sustainable, and lethal. It will be able to react rapidly

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*To “deconstruct” a text is to analyze it so as to discern not its putative central themes but those that are marginalized and left unsaid.*

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and throughout the world. It will mass its effects (that is, its “fires,” the collective impact of its long-range attacks) and deliver them precisely, rather than massing phys-

ically the weapons themselves. *JV 2020* differs from *JV 2010* only by increasing the “degree” of its adjectives: *smaller*, *more* protected, *more* mobile, etc. The overarching concept of both *JV 2010* and *JV 2020* forces is to manifest “full spectrum dominance”—the ability to fight anywhere with sufficient superiority to defeat any foe with minimal loss to themselves (*JV 2010*, pages 1–34; *JV 2020*, pages 1–45).

The method sections of *JV 2010* and *JV 2020* are different, but they share two themes—the progress of technology and the development of the human element (organization, tactics, leadership). *JV 2010*’s method is to exploit the American combined advantage of technology and highly professional personnel (*JV 2010*, pages 1–34). For its part, *JV 2020*, in line with its shift in foundation, emphasizes innovations in human factors in order to offset the potential loss of technological superiority. This shift in method is subtle but continuously repeated throughout *JV 2020*. In fact, the emphasis given this point in the text suggests that it may be the primary reason that *JV 2020* was published (*JV 2020*, pages 1–45).

With the central themes thus developed, our next step is to identify the marginal themes. There are three significant marginal themes in *JV 2010*: the impact of the “fog” (uncertainty, imperfectness of information) and “friction” (delay, interference, inertia) of war on operations; the role of massed forces; and the conduct of “military operations other than war” (MOOTW).

*Joint Vision 2010* mentions fog and friction only to deprecate them, to predict that their effects will be minimized by anticipated advances in technology:



While friction and fog of war can never be eliminated, new technology promises to *mitigate* their impact [JV 2010, page 16; emphasis supplied, here and throughout].

*Although* this will not eliminate the fog of war, dominant battlespace awareness will improve situational awareness, decrease response time and *make the battlespace considerably more transparent* to those who achieve it [JV 2010, page 13].

JV 2020, however, refutes the idea that fog and friction can be marginalized:

Information Superiority neither equates to perfect information nor does it mean the elimination of the fog of war [JV 2020, page 12].

*Joint Vision 2020's* recognition of the inevitability of fog and friction—declared positively, without the qualifications used in JV 2010—is representative of the shift in emphasis of the later document from technology to the human element in conflict.

*Joint Vision 2010* always refers to the secondary concept of the physical assembling of large forces (as opposed to the concentration of their effects) only in the context of exceptions to the expected norm of future operations:

*In the past*, our capabilities often required us to physically mass forces to neutralize enemy power [JV 2010, page 17].

Extensive physical presence *may* later be necessary to accomplish the assigned mission [JV 2010, page 27].

*Joint Vision 2020* does not mention massing of actual forces even as a secondary concern, but neither does it refute *Joint Vision 2010* on this point. The clear implication is that for the smaller, mobile military foreseen by JV 2010 the ability to mass large forces for a campaign is not of primary importance.

The third secondary concept of JV 2010 is that of military operations other than war. Although MOOTW considerations are mentioned throughout the text, they are always presented as subsidiary to warfighting:

*In addition* we should expect to participate in a broad range of deterrent, conflict prevention and peacetime activities [JV 2010, page 4].

*Other* operations, from humanitarian assistance in peacetime through peace operations in a near hostile environment, have proved to be possible using forces *optimized* for wartime effectiveness [JV 2010, page 17].

*Joint Vision 2020* follows the lead of its predecessor in treating military operations other than war as of less than vital importance:

It *also* includes those ambiguous situations presiding between peace and war [JV 2020, page 8].

Achieving full-spectrum dominance means that the joint force will fulfill its *primary* purpose—victory in war, *as well as* achieving success across the range of operations [JV 2020, page 9].

*Joint Vision 2020* adds three new marginal ideas, points that are not present at all in *Joint Vision 2010*: technological innovation, information superiority, and multinational and interagency operations. The marginalization of technology in JV 2020 (though the white paper assumes that the technological improvements foreseen by the earlier document will occur) is in line with the paper's central idea, expressed in its foundation section, that the United States cannot assume it will enjoy technological superiority in the future. *Joint Vision 2020* seeks to redress the imbalance in favor of technology of JV 2010:

Realization of the full potential of these changes requires *not only* technological improvement, but the continued evolution of organizations and doctrine [JV 2020, page 12].

Although technical interoperability is essential, *it is not sufficient* to ensure effective operations [JV 2020, page 21].

Our thinking about command and control must be *conceptually* based, *rather* than focused on technology and material [JV 2020, page 40].

JV 2020's marginalization of information superiority goes hand in hand with its treatment of technology. Where *Joint Vision 2010* held up information superiority as an essential force multiplier, *Joint Vision 2020* subsumes it within the concept of "decision dominance"—an overarching concept that includes nontechnology based elements. Information superiority is only one part, and not the most important, of "decision dominance."

The creation of information superiority *is not* an end in itself [JV 2020, page 11].

While changes in the information environment have *led some to focus solely* [JV 2010] on the contribution of information superiority to command and control, it is *equally necessary* to understand the complete realm of command and control decision making, the nature of organizational collaboration, and *especially*, the human in the loop [JV 2020, page 38].

The last marginal concept of JV 2020 is that of multinational and interagency operations. *Joint Vision 2010* treats multinational operations as insignificant and barely mentions interagency operations. *Joint Vision 2020* discusses both concepts at length, but always as secondary to the central idea of unilateral joint military action. There is no expectation that either will be routine.

To coordinate military operations, *as necessary*, with government agencies and international organizations [JV 2020, page 5].

The joint force of 2020 will integrate protective capabilities from multinational and interagency partners *when available* and will respond to their requirements *when possible* [JV 2020, page 33].

What has been left out of the doctrinal papers? With one exception, the same major possibilities are absent from both *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020*: that of a major change in U.S. national goals and interests, that of the emergence of a single “peer competitor,” and that of the primary focus of the military shifting from warfighting to operations other than war. The exception is the idea of human considerations, such as doctrine and organization, driving technology in the development of future forces. *Joint Vision 2010* does not mention the possibility, but *JV 2020* makes it a central theme. The “absences” of a change to national interests and of a new peer competitor are perceived by reversing central ideas of the joint visions—the continuity of U.S. national interests, and a multiplicity of state and nonstate adversaries. That any shift to operations other than war has been omitted is revealed by considering the implications of converting MOOTW, actually a marginal concept, into a primary one.

Are any of these three “left-out” possibilities of analytical value? A change to U.S. national interests, as defined by the joint vision documents, is very unlikely. *JV 2010* defines U.S. national interests so broadly—ensuring security of the nation’s people and possessions, ensuring domestic prosperity, and promoting worldwide democracy—that it is hard to imagine other interests that would take their place (*JV 2010*, page 3). Different emphases might arise, but there are no reasonable opposites. However, the prospects of a peer competitor emerging or of military operations other than war becoming primary are less improbable; neither is out of the realm of possibility. Inclusion of these ideas would substantially change the central themes of both joint vision papers.

Does deconstruction of *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* produce any insights worth pondering? There seem to be three. First, there is a *shift in emphasis*—from technology over human factors in *JV 2010*, to the reverse in *JV 2020*. *Joint Vision 2020* otherwise binds itself so closely to *JV 2010* that this difference is obscured. It is not true, however, as many might assume, that neither text says anything very different from the other. This shift in philosophy, whether intended or not, is an important one that should be clearly acknowledged.

Both joint visions make military operations other than war *a secondary priority* to warfighting—although, aside from Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, at least, U.S. forces currently spend most of their time executing them. As a consequence, large formations are not envisioned in the small, mobile force of the future, yet they are required for many of the “human intensive” other-than-war

missions, such as peacekeeping. Perhaps this implies the idea of creating within the services a force specialized for operations other than war, with proportionately more personnel but fewer assets for agility and precision strike.

*Joint Visions 2010* and *2020* forecast a force able to *go anywhere and fight anyone*, as opposed to a specific foe in a particular theater. For practical purposes, there are problems with such an all-encompassing approach. Deconstruction suggests there might be value in competing joint visions, each focused on a different potential adversary. These visions would be more than operational plans, based on forces already in place; rather, they would redesign the entire joint force as necessary to meet and defeat most effectively the given foe. These “hedge” visions would still be secondary to *JV 2020* or its successors, but they could be wellsprings of ideas.

#### “THE VISION STATEMENT OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS” AND *MARINE CORPS STRATEGY 21*

The current Marine Corps “vision” documents are “The Vision Statement of the U.S. Marine Corps” (for short, the “USMC Vision Statement”), originally released as a naval message, and *Marine Corps Strategy 21* (or *MC Strategy 21*). The Marine documents explicitly claim to support *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020*.<sup>4</sup> The USMC Vision Statement is incorporated verbatim in *MC Strategy 21*, on the first page; nonetheless, it should be treated as a separate text, because its explanatory notes shed significant light on both documents.

What can deconstruction of the Marine visions tell us with respect to the joint texts? We begin as before, examining each of the three main parts of the two documents. The foundation is the single largest section of *MC Strategy 21* (four of nine pages). The emphasis there points to the central idea in the Marine texts: that the Marine Corps already embodies the correct model for the future.

The [General Officers Futures Group] concluded that the Corps requires only marginal adjustments to successfully adapt [for the future]. We do, in fact, have it right.<sup>5</sup>

The Marine texts’ foundation reflects a national security environment that interestingly contrasts with that of the joint visions, an environment in which the United States is likely to face both state and nonstate actors in conflicts across the spectrum. In a chaotic setting, large-scale conventional warfare will be the exception, and a variety of lesser contingencies the rule (*MC Strategy 21*, pages 4–5). Although the point is not explicitly made, it is safe to assume that the Marines would recognize the same national interests as does *Joint Vision 2010*: ensuring domestic security and prosperity, and promoting worldwide democracy. The USMC Vision Statement, however, adds a more detailed assumption:

Opportunities and challenges in the world's littoral regions will increase America's reliance on the continuous forward presence and sustainable maritime power projection of naval expeditionary forces [USMC Vision Statement].

While this statement is not at odds with anything in *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020*, neither is it supported by any passages in the joint texts. The declaration reflects a predictable maritime bias, but also a distinct political and strategic assumption.

The current status of the Marine Corps, in the view of the documents, is that, with its highly trained personnel, it can provide combatant commanders with mission-tailored Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs). These task forces are able to deal with a large range of crises and contingencies across the spectrum of conflict, including forward presence and quick strategic response (*MC Strategy 21*, pages 2, 3, 5).

The end state outlined in the foundations of the Marine vision texts is, significantly, strikingly similar to their current-status statements:

The Marine Corps will enhance its strategic agility, operational reach, and tactical flexibility to enable joint, allied, and coalition operations and interagency coordination. These capabilities will provide combatant commanders with scalable, interoperable, combined-arms Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) to shape the international environment, respond quickly to the complex spectrum of crises and conflicts, and gain access or prosecute forcible entry operations [USMC Vision Statement; *MC Strategy 21*, page 1].

This envisioned end state is further confirmation that the Marine Corps' central idea is improvement of the current force, not transformation to a new type of force. The Marine end-state force is simply an amphibious version of the joint end-state force. The *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* end state was to be a smaller force, protected, mobile, and sustainable, able to react rapidly throughout the globe and to mass the effects of its precise, lethal strikes without physically massing its own elements. The Marine vision documents do not directly address precise lethality or the massing of effects, but the passages related to improving operational reach and tactical flexibility can be interpreted as covering those two joint concepts. The Marine papers support no views that would be contrary to any stated joint concept; the Marine texts may not match the joint texts adjective for adjective, but the improved Marine air-ground task forces fit well within the *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* parameters.

The method espoused in the Marine vision texts is one of evolution and improvement; the most frequently used verbs in the Marine vision texts are "enhance," "evolve," and "expand" (*MC Strategy 21*, pages 6–8). This approach emphasizes the recruitment and retention of high-quality personnel by

promoting traditional core values and a “warrior ethic,” as well as the improvement of operational capabilities by “optimizing” current structure and “capitalizing” on innovation (*MC Strategy 21*, pages 6–8). *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020* revolve around the concepts of technology and “human elements” (such as doctrine and organization); the Marine vision texts are not explicit in this area but seem to match more closely *Joint Vision 2020*, with its emphasis on concepts and organizations rather than the impact of new technologies (*MC Strategy 21*, pages 6–8).<sup>6</sup>

Having established the central ideas of the Marine texts, the deconstructionist reader can pull out from them the significant marginal points. There is only one—that sustained conventional combat operations are secondary in likelihood, and thus importance, to other deterrence and contingency operations at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. The technique of the Marine texts is to arrange potential employment options and capabilities in lists; the fighting of battles always appears at the end of these lists, sometimes with a qualifier, sometimes without.

These forces will promote national interests, influence vital regions, and fight and win the nation’s battles [USMC Vision Statement; *MC Strategy 21*, page 1].

Every Marine and Marine unit is ready to rapidly task organize, deploy, and employ from [the continental United States] or while forward deployed to respond and contain crises or, *if necessary*, to immediately engage in sustained combat operations [*MC Strategy 21*, page 2].

Throughout our Nation’s history, Marines have responded to national and international brushfires and crises and, *when necessary*, war [*MC Strategy 21*, page 3].

As an expeditionary, task-organized, combined arms force with superb small-unit leaders, we are prepared to promote peace and stability or, *if required*, defeat our Nation’s adversaries [*MC Strategy 21*, page 5].

Multiple belligerents and a blurring of distinctions and national affiliations among terrorist groups, subnational factions, insurgent groups, and international criminals will complicate an environment where *a direct attack is often the least likely course of action* [*MC Strategy 21*, page 5].

The Marine vision texts do not exclude the possibility of major combat operations; their marginalization concerns only their likelihood. Nonetheless, in this respect the Marine documents diverge significantly from *Joint Vision 2010* and *Joint Vision 2020*. Both joint texts presume the opposite, emphasizing warfighting over other operations.

The Marine texts do not directly address the “fog and friction” of combat or the role of large physical-presence forces, which were mentioned in the joint documents as secondary issues. The Marine warfighting doctrine of maneuver

warfare, which is restated in *MC Strategy 21*, agrees with *JV 2020* that fog and friction are inherent parts of conflict and cannot be marginalized.<sup>7</sup> The Marine emphasis on maritime forces could be understood as discounting the need for large physical-presence ground forces, but it begs the question of the size of the maritime forces required instead. The relative marginalization of major theater war in favor of operations other than war and such lesser crises is the only distinct secondary idea.

Three “possibilities left out” suggest themselves. The first would be a reversal of the marginalization of major combat operations. Such a shift would emphasize the Marine Corps role in warfighting at the possible expense of its ability to maintain forward presence or respond to small-scale contingencies. The second major possibility left out of the Marine vision texts is that of an end-state force radically different from the present Marine air-ground task force concept. Such a reversal would go against the grain of the Marine texts, which postulate that evolution, not revolution, is the appropriate path. The last possibility left out of the Marine texts mirrors one from *Joint Vision 2010 and 2020*: that of designing the Marine Corps to meet the threat of a specific future peer competitor.

This deconstruction of the two recent Marine Corps vision documents offers three ideas for consideration. First, the U.S. military might want to develop a “hedge” capability to address operations other than war. The Marine Corps seems to be offering itself as that capability and may want to commit to develop itself further in this direction. Such a choice could reduce the Marines’ contribution to major-theater-warfare situations, but it would increase their utility in what is apparently going to be the most prevalent form of military employment.<sup>8</sup>

Second, the Marine Corps should look to doctrinal revolution as well as evolution. The present direction may be correct, but that assumption should not stifle development and experimentation of concepts that do not involve the Marine air-ground task force as now known. Such concepts could involve the elimination or severe curtailment of various elements of the task force in order to allocate more resources to the others. The Marine air-ground task force should not be dogma.

Finally, the Marine Corps may want to develop along lines devised to fight a specific adversary.<sup>9</sup> Such visions, if carried far enough, may lead to the development of new ideas and capabilities that could also be useful in a broader sense.

None of the considerations arising from these two case studies are fully developed and usable as they stand; perhaps they are not feasible at all. What is important for present purposes, however, is that they were not self-evident at the outset. They emerged from the process of deconstruction; this demonstrates the



usefulness of that method for closely analyzing texts and generating ideas for further study.

Military officers are continually encouraged to “think out of the box.” It is difficult, however, to break out of established and habitual perspectives. Deconstruction helps a reader do this by offering a method to perform a new kind of analysis. With some adaptation, the deconstruction technique can also be used on other military texts, such as more concrete doctrinal publications. Although doctrine manuals are not organized like “white papers” and vision documents, their central ideas can still be made to reveal themselves in unfamiliar and unexpected lights. Their secondary points can be extracted and explored in useful critiques; like vision statements, doctrine is sometimes expressed in weak and vague terms. In those and other kinds of texts, deconstruction reveals ideas and themes that are present or implicit but do not become apparent in a conventional reading. This analytical technique can be helpful to military readers, as well as the scholars for whom it was developed, in forcing them to see beyond what a text *seems* to say, to apply critical and creative thought to understanding what it *means*.

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#### NOTES

1. U.S. Joint Staff, *Joint Vision 2010* [hereafter *JV 2010*] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Office [hereafter GPO], July 1996), pp. 2–34; and U.S. Joint Staff, *Joint Vision 2020* [hereafter *JV 2020*] (Washington, D.C.: GPO, June 2000), pp. 2–45.
2. Glenn Ward, *Teach Yourself Postmodernism* (Chicago: NTC/Contemporary Publishing, 1997), pp. 94–101. Deconstruction is credited to the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida. The primary texts on deconstruction are difficult reading. For our purposes an introductory text is suitable.
3. The textual sources for the summarized central themes are indicated throughout each of the texts.
4. U.S. Navy Dept., *Marine Corps Strategy 21* [hereafter *MC Strategy 21*] (Washington D.C.: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, 2001), p. 5.
5. Commandant of the Marine Corps Message to All Marines [hereafter CMC ALMAR] 42/00, “The Vision Statement of the United States Marine Corps,” message date-time group 152000Z November [15 November, 8 P.M. Greenwich time] 2000.
6. Of the thirty “aims” deployed, ten could be considered primarily human based, seven are technology based, and thirteen are a combination of technology and human elements.
7. U.S. Navy Dept., *Warfighting*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, June 1997), pp. 5–9; and *MC Strategy 21*, p. 9.
8. This “MTW/MOOTW” argument bears some similarities to the Marine Corps struggle in the 1920s and 1930s whether amphibious warfare should replace its traditional role as colonial infantry.
9. Marine Corps development of amphibious warfare owed much to planning for a war with Japan.

## NATIONAL INTERESTS

### Grand Purposes or Catchphrases?

James F. Miskel

It has become virtually a matter of faith among statesmen and academics that foreign policy is best made when national interests are clearly defined and articulated.<sup>1</sup> How best to define and prioritize national interests can, of course, be a matter of considerable dispute. Thus the controversies that swirled around U.S. policy toward Bosnia and Kosovo, for example, have been sometimes understood as reflections of fundamental disagreement about how U.S. national interests in the Balkans should be defined and prioritized relative to other national interests in the region and other parts of the world. Implicit in these and similar debates about national interests and foreign policy are two assumptions. One is that national interests can be defined precisely. This assumption is obviously true, although actually defining and prioritizing specific interests may be rather difficult in the contemporary era, with growing interdependence among nations and no superpower competition. The second assumption is that states-

men actually attempt to define national interests with precision. Judging from recent history, this assumption warrants challenge.

At least in recent years, statesmen have been reluctant to define national interests with anything other than Delphic ambiguity. Like the ancient Greek oracle, famous for its double-entendre predictions and deliberately obscure advice, today's statesmen routinely offer "definitions" of the national interest so broad that they can be, and in fact are, interpreted in more than one way and in any case reveal little about the actual long-range goals of the nation.

*Dr. Miskel is the director of the Policy Making and Implementation Division of the Naval War College's National Security Decision Making Department and the College's acting dean of academics. Earning his doctorate at the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1977, he served in the Department of Health and Human Services before joining the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1984. He was the director for defense policy on the National Security Council staff in 1987–89, thereafter returning to FEMA as assistant associate director. He is the author of *Buying Trouble? National Security and Reliance on Foreign Industry* (1993) and of articles in numerous journals.*

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Very generally speaking, there are two basic schools of thought about how national interests should be defined. One school, the avatars of which might be realist statesmen like Otto von Bismarck in the nineteenth century and Richard Nixon in the twentieth, holds that national interests should be defined in terms of a state's tangible power and sphere of influence relative to those of other states. The single most important form of tangible power for this realist school is military (cannons and rifles in Bismarck's era, nuclear missiles and bombers in Nixon's); the statesman's ultimate challenge is to maintain a balance of military power that is favorable to his or her state. Hence, realists tend to believe that the United States has no important national interests at stake in places like Bosnia and Kosovo, because events there have only a marginal effect on the global distribution of military power.

The other school holds that national interests should be defined more broadly to encompass intangible, but nevertheless highly prized, values like human rights, freedom from economic deprivation, and freedom from disease. In their vastly different ways, Woodrow Wilson and V. I. Lenin might be thought of as exemplars of this school. Both leaders employed the military power of their states to promote, respectively, the values of national self-determination and economic egalitarianism. Advocates of American military action in Bosnia and Kosovo, for instance, tended to argue that events in the Balkans are direct affronts to important intangible values and thus must be confronted. They further argued, perhaps as a sop to realists, that if Washington had ignored them, the ability of the United States to wield "soft power" in other areas would have gradually eroded.

For the last century, the foreign policies of the United States and many other countries have been largely shaped by the decisions of statesmen who have charted courses in the middle ground between the two national-interest schools. This hundred-year database suggests that there has been a collective, albeit unexpressed, judgment by practitioners that neither school has it exactly right. It also suggests that whatever they say in public, practitioners have realized that attempts to define national interests in enough detail to serve as actual guides for foreign policy are, all too often, frustrating and ultimately sterile exercises.

Why, then, are Delphic bows toward the altar of national interest virtually de rigueur in public policy and academic circles? The reason, to the cynic's mind, is that justifying decisions on the basis of supposed relationships to national interests—even vaguely defined national interests—is both intellectually and sentimentally gratifying. Obligatory tips of the hat to the national interest have intellectual appeal in that they appear to validate the expectation of scholars, legislators, and voters that statesmen will base their decisions on reasoned

evaluations of the connection between ends and means. After all, without a clear picture of the ends—national interests—objective comparisons of alternative courses of action would be (and, as importantly, would be perceived by voters as being) little more than guesswork.

Allusions to the national interests are sentimentally attractive because they reaffirm the presumption that the expenditures and exertions that result from strategic decisions are made for worthy purposes. Even in nondemocratic

regimes, creating the sense that worthwhile ends are being served is often vital to the mobilization of national effort. Domestic political support from key interest groups, if not from the population as a whole, is often the sine qua non of successful policy im-

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*The answers to pressing questions about future U.S. policy would seem to depend at least in part on how national interests are defined and prioritized.*

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plementation, regardless of the nature of the regime. After all, even Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler, the most ruthless of twentieth-century dictators, felt compelled to justify the sacrifices they demanded of their people by connecting those sacrifices to the grand purposes of “socialism in one country” and German territorial expansion, respectively.

Recent policy documents from Washington illustrate a proclivity toward defining national interests with studied imprecision and away from definitions that are specific enough actually to guide policy or to engage the public in a meaningful dialogue about the grand purposes that foreign policy might, and perhaps should, serve. The national security strategy statements issued by presidents more or less annually since the late 1980s are prime examples. These strategy publications were legislatively mandated in 1986 by the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act. Thus it is technically accurate to characterize the annual strategy reports as something that the executive branch publishes without enthusiasm and only because its collective arm has been twisted.

The 1986 legislation specified that the reports were to identify national interests and the strategies being pursued to achieve them, and that both classified and unclassified reports were to be published.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the legislation makes explicit the congressional assumption that foreign policy is best made and best overseen when national interests are clearly defined. The act required unclassified reports in order to inform Congress as a whole and the public at large. While an unclassified strategy report must be considerably less detailed than its classified sibling, the unclassified documents that have been issued since 1986 have defined national interests so broadly as to raise doubts about whether the

reports serve any constructive purpose in terms of educating or even informing the public.

The December 2000 national security strategy report, which President William Clinton issued only a month before the inauguration of President George W. Bush, is typical. A parting shot, a laundry list of bromides and unfulfilled wishes, the 2000 report nevertheless resembles national security strategy statements from the Clinton and earlier administrations in terms of how those statements defined national interests.<sup>3</sup> “Vital interests,” the 2000 report declared, “are those directly connected to the survival, safety, and vitality of our nation. Among these are the physical security of our territory. . . . We will do what we must to defend these interests. This may involve the use of military force, including unilateral action, where deemed necessary or appropriate.”<sup>4</sup>

At one level, this “definition” simply restates the obvious. There can hardly be any need to explain to the American public, to any other national government on the planet, or even to any terrorist organization, that the U.S. government considers military attacks on or within its sovereign borders injurious to vital American interests. There may be no harm in restating the obvious, but neither is any grand purpose served.

Furthermore, the excerpt above makes clear that this definition of “vital national interest” is intended to cover more than “merely” military attack by a hostile state on the land occupied by the United States or expansion by another state into territory over which the United States claims sovereignty. Plainly, if these were the exclusive foci of the definition, there would hardly be any reason to say that response “may involve the use of military force.” Neither would it be necessary to indicate that threats to vital national interests can be envisioned in response to which unilateral military action would be neither necessary nor appropriate. Yet, as to what those situations might be, the report provides no insight. In other words, this definition of a “vital national interest” provides clarity where the point is obvious but is otherwise vacuous.

The protection of sovereign territory is only one of the national interests that have been defined in overly general terms. Others include “the safety of our citizens both at home and abroad,” “the economic well-being of our society,” and “the protection of our critical infrastructure—including . . . vital human services and government services—from disruption intended to cripple their operation.”<sup>5</sup> These national interests are so broadly defined as to be the functional equivalent of platitudes. They are catchphrases that no statesman or politician would ever publicly reject—what would be the point?—but that nevertheless play absolutely no meaningful role in the policy formulation process.

No policy maker in Washington would ever declare his or her indifference to the safety of American citizens, to the protection of critical infrastructure, or to

the nation's economic well-being. Simply stating, however, that all three are desirable says nothing about the directions that policy makers intend to take. Nor do such statements do anything to inform or educate the public. Thus, on several counts, the ways in which American national interests are being defined appear to defeat the purpose of Congress in requiring unclassified reports about the goals and directions of the nation's security strategy.

Admittedly, from the perspective of the statesman-navigator charting a particular foreign policy course, there may be practical reasons for preferring the ambiguity of Delphi over the precision of science when it comes to publicly explaining the relationship between the national interests and the nation's foreign and defense policies. Policy formulation and implementation usually require

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*There may be no harm in restating the obvious, but neither is any grand purpose served.*

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some level of agreement, compromise, or political consensus—in effect, marriages of convenience between the executive branch of government and other elements of society. Such marriages are

considerably easier to arrange when the terms are defined only generally than when they are set out in detail. Marriages of convenience between Congress and the executive branch and between the Republican and Democratic parties, however temporary, can be essential to the foreign and defense policy-making processes. They are, indeed, the basis of the shibboleth that politics should end at the water's edge.

A complicating factor in the era of globalization is that nongovernmental entities—such as multinational corporations, humanitarian relief organizations, vested interest groups, and coalitions of concerned citizens, each with its perspectives and issues—have proven that they can influence policy formulation by lobbying and generating pressure through the media. If only through bitter experience, statesmen have come to understand that to express national interests in detailed, specific terms is often to invite political challenge from entities whose special interests are adversely affected by some nuance.

Another reason for the practitioner's preference for general descriptions of national interest is that specific formulations can have unintended consequences. The most infamous example is North Korea's attack on South Korea in 1950 after Washington had indicated that the latter was outside the geographic zone of vital U.S. national interests. Such instances can be cited as proof that ambiguity serves a strategically useful purpose; nonetheless, it is not always the wisest course. Indeed, ambiguity appears as likely as specificity to send the kind of inadvertent signals that creates crises. It is, for example, conceivable that until the air war on Serbia in 2000, Slobodan Milosevic and the other perpetrators of

human rights abuses in the Balkans were emboldened by the apparent uncertainty of the United States as to its national interests in the former Yugoslavia. Further, it seems quite likely that the platitudinous expressions by Washington and other governments in the mid-1990s about the importance of human rights were actually interpreted in Rwanda as signals of indifference toward genocide in sub-Saharan Africa.

A negative consequence of another order is the shallowness of the political alliances negotiated among Congress, the White House, Democratic and Republican activists, and special-interest groups on the basis of vaguely defined and ambiguously prioritized national interests. Marriages of convenience can very quickly mutate into separations of convenience—perhaps a minor problem when the issues themselves merit only modest and brief bursts of energy from the body politic, but potentially of great significance for matters that are serious and lasting.

Over the long term, ambiguity imposes a heavy opportunity cost in terms of forfeited occasions in which the public might have been educated about grand purposes—enduring issues and long-term objectives being addressed by the foreign policy establishment. The American public is famously uninterested in foreign affairs, and this indifference presumably contributes to its passive acceptance of deliberately vague definitions of national interests. Whether such ambiguity is the “chicken” or the “egg” of the public’s unconcern, democracy suffers when leaders continually defer serious dialogue about how national interests should be defined and prioritized.

The foreign policy establishment has periodically, although not recently, engaged the public and Congress in serious discourse about the national interest; and when it has, enduring public and legislative support for specific grand strategies has resulted. This occurred, for example, during the early 1980s, at the end of the Jimmy Carter administration and the beginning of the Ronald Reagan administration, when there was a broad public debate about the level of U.S. defense spending needed in light of the threat posed by the Soviet Union and its bloc. The result was public support for a multiyear, across-the-board increase in defense spending and for a more assertive foreign policy. Earlier in the Cold War there had been a similar dialogue involving the public and Congress; in the end, the policies of containment and nuclear deterrence were formulated and the Nato treaty was approved. Each of these strategies required and was to receive decades-long political support by the public and financial support by the public’s representatives in Congress.

Another example occurred during the years after World War I, when President Wilson tried to convince the public and Congress that membership in the League of Nations was in the national interest of the United States. Wilson failed, but the public debate had lasting effects. For almost two decades the public and



its elected representatives supported a foreign policy that minimized defense spending and commitments outside the hemisphere, particularly commitments with military implications. Indeed, the fact that the outcome of the debate was different than Wilson intended demonstrates the value of serious public discourse in the first place. Had the president been able to attach the nation to the League by executive fiat, its membership would have been futile. The mood of Congress and the public would have denied Wilson support for the expansive foreign and defense strategies that he envisioned as part and parcel of the League of Nations ideal.

A public debate about national interests after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was, of course, unnecessary, at least with respect to mobilizing public support for homeland security programs and the war against the perpetrators of the attacks and their supporters. There are, however, other aspects of the war on terrorism for which public and congressional support is less certain, because their relationships to the 11 September attacks are indirect.

For example, the direction that the war on terrorism will take after Afghanistan is by no means clear—beyond the fact that it will be a long-term effort. One need not agree that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are part of an “axis of evil” to

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*After all, even the most ruthless of twentieth-century dictators felt compelled to justify the sacrifices they demanded of their people by connecting them to grand purposes.*

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recognize that President Bush’s critics have failed to acknowledge that publicly labeling rogue states is a positive step in terms of debating and defining more rigorously than usual national interests with respect to each. In the process of engaging Congress, and through

it the public, in a substantive dialogue about the nation’s interests in preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction developed by rogue states, the “axis of evil” epithet is preferable to platitudes about the survival and vitality of the United States.

Other issues with indirect but important relationships to homeland security and to the future direction of the war on terrorism are the Arab-Israeli peace process and the concept of “nation building,” assistance in the restoration of collapsed states to viability on the basis of democratic institutions. With respect to the latter, judgments will be required over the next several years about the role the United States should play in nation building in order to prevent future terrorists from finding platforms in the no-man’s-lands of ineffective or failing states. Nation building is not a science. It is an art that takes effort and investment over extended periods of time. In Bosnia, for example, nation building has

been under way since 1996, but the end of the project is not in sight. Should the role of the United States be direct or indirect? Should the work be led by the United Nations or by some multilateral organization, perhaps built for the purpose? The answers to these and other questions would seem to depend at least in part on how U.S. national interests are defined and prioritized. Further, public and congressional support for this complex and expensive task may depend heavily on the depth of the American people's understanding of and commitment to those interests.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is related to the war on terrorism and homeland security because Islamic extremists, and many Muslims generally, condemn the United States for enabling Israel to defend itself and maintain its hold over occupied territory. Since at least 1973, when Secretary of State Henry Kissinger shuttled between Arab and Israeli capitals to negotiate a cease-fire and withdrawal of forces after the Yom Kippur/Ramadan War, the United States has invested considerable time, energy, and resources in pursuit of a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Presidents Carter and Clinton, in the 1970s and 1990s, respectively, were personally engaged in the peace process; during the Reagan and George Bush administrations, the secretaries of state actively promoted settlement. Reagan's secretary of state, George Shultz, negotiated what turned out to be a short-lived peace settlement in 1983; Bush's secretary of state, James Baker, shuttled to the Middle East eleven times in a single year (1991) and hosted an Arab-Israeli peace conference in Madrid.

There were, of course, ebbs and flow in the level of direct U.S. engagement in the peace process, due to judgments at the time about the practical prospects for success. What is remarkable is rather the consistently high level of effort over three decades despite major shifts in the geostrategic environment. U.S. shuttle diplomacy, forward military presence in the eastern Mediterranean, and substantial foreign aid investment in Israel and Egypt started during the Cold War. Today the United States is no longer vying with a rival superpower, and its national interests in the region are presumably either different or, at the very least, less at risk. U.S. strategies, nevertheless, appear to have changed hardly at all. High-level emissaries still shuttle to the Middle East in attempts to mediate; the United States gives more foreign aid to both Israel and Egypt than to any other country; and forward military presence in the eastern Mediterranean continues. The reason is that such enmity and distrust exist between the Palestinians and the Israelis that no true settlement will ever be reached without long-term commitment by the United States. This almost certainly will entail nation-building assistance to the Palestinians, even more foreign aid to Israel (and perhaps to Egypt and other moderate Arab states), and either security guarantees or the actual interposition of American peacekeepers. It may be hard to maintain steady

levels of political support for such sustained efforts if they are “marketed” to the American public and Congress on the basis of catchphrases and buzzwords about national interests.

There may be other policy areas that will also require long-term support from the public and Congress. It is not necessary to identify them here. The point is that for thoroughly practical reasons—specifically, the mobilization and maintenance of resources and commitment for projects that require protracted effort—it would be wise to engage the public and Congress in a meaningful dialogue about the national interests that may be involved. Such a dialogue is simply not possible when national interests are so generally defined that they mean all things to all people. So in this regard, for the future direction of the war against terrorism, the president’s “axis of evil” speech was a useful, clarifying step. The congressional requirement for annual unclassified national security reports, in contrast, has proven to have little value in furthering the debate. Congress would do well to consider whether the public interest would be better served if national security reports were required only once in a presidential term—on the assumption that interests and strategies do not, or at least should not, change annually.

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#### NOTES

1. Examples include Michèle A. Flournoy, ed., *QDR 2001: Strategy-Driven Choices for America’s Security* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense Univ. Press, 2001), pp. 10–1; Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, “Competing Visions for U.S. Strategy,” *International Security*, Winter 1997, pp. 5–53; and Donald E. Neuchterlein, *America Recommitted: United States National Interests in a Restructured World* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1991), pp. 13–22. Indeed, as Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow argue in *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed. (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1999), most analysts assume that nation-states orient their strategic decisions around national interests. Allison and Zelikow argue that the “rational actor model” assumes that statesmen have reasonably clear appreciations of the national interests and act in ways that maximize those interests.
2. Public Law 99-433, sec. 603 (a) (104).
3. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, D.C.: White House, December 1999), p. 1, and *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, D.C.: White House, May 1997), p. 5; and George Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: White House, August 1991), p. 3.
4. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (Washington, D.C.: White House, December 2000), p. 4.
5. Ibid.

## IN MY VIEW

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### WAY OUT THERE

Sir:

Professor Roger W. Barnett's critique of Frances FitzGerald's book, *Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War*, is long on indignation but short on substance. Dr. Barnett certainly is correct to suspect the arms control bias that informs FitzGerald's book. Yet his own critique suffers from a pro-missile defense bias that distorts his analysis of an extremely important, if ultimately inadequate, research effort.

For example, FitzGerald does not assert that Ronald Reagan's administration "got it wrong, at every step, all of the time." Rather, FitzGerald claims that the administration began getting it right in the wake of the Iran-Contra scandal, when both the president and his wife sought to salvage his legacy through arms control agreements with Mikhail Gorbachev. Although one can dispute the cause of this "reversal" in favor of arms control, keep in mind that another scholar, one quite sympathetic to Reagan, argues for just such a reversal—Beth A. Fischer, in *The Reagan Reversal*.

Dr. Barnett criticizes FitzGerald for finding Reagan to be "a simple-minded president . . . surrounded and captured by hard-line anticommunists." Here, the reader must decide—especially after reading what Henry Kissinger has to say about his meetings with the president (p. 175), and after contemplating how a president who had delivered the "visionary" Star Wars speech in March 1983 could ask Secretary of State George Shultz in November 1985, "Now tell me again, George, what's the difference between a ballistic missile and a cruise missile?" (p. 534).

Finally and most significantly, while criticizing FitzGerald's "lack of understanding of strategy," Dr. Barnett commits an equally egregious error—that of simply assuming that the Reagan administration's missile defense strategy worked. Apparently, neither FitzGerald nor Barnett knew of the following important facts from Soviet sources:

- In 1985, the Soviet Union initiated its *protivodeistvie* (counteraction) program, which explored asymmetric responses to an American missile defense system.
- The most effective weapon to emerge from that program was the Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile, which ultimately was equipped with numerous penetration aids of such sophistication that some Russian generals today claim that it can penetrate any missile defense that the United States might deploy during the next twenty years.
- Consequently, Gorbachev wasn't bluffing when he informed Reagan (in November 1985 at Geneva), "I think you should know that we have already developed a response. It will be effective and far less expensive than your project, and be ready for use in less time."
- Gorbachev was proven correct on all three counts when, in 1998, Russia began deployment of the first Topol-M ICBMs. Thus development and deployment survived both the Soviet collapse and the economic duress that post-Soviet Russia experienced during its first decade of existence.

These facts alone undermine any argument about the impact on the Soviet Union of a yet-to-be-deployed and perhaps unrealizable missile defense system. Just as no policy maker should ever assume that every strategy will achieve its intended results automatically (Reagan's almost led to nuclear war in 1983!), no historian should ever misconstrue political and strategic initiatives as automatic political and strategic successes—or strategy as history.

WALTER C. UHLER

*Chief of Operations  
Defense Contract Management Agency,  
Lockheed Martin Delaware Valley  
Camden, New Jersey*

*Professor Barnett replies:*

Last year I went to a presentation at Brown University by Frances FitzGerald on *Way Out There in the Blue*. After her talk, a member of the audience stepped to the microphone and said that as a physicist he could categorically state that ballistic missile defenses could never work. Spoken within those hallowed halls, this statement astounded me. It does offer some insight, however, into how politics and ideology can befoul one's self-respect. For what self-respecting scientist might sensibly argue the impossibility of an effort that in no way violates the known laws of physics? This is, accordingly, not a scientific judgment, and no pro-missile defense bias or any other bias can distort how such politicized thinking permeates both Frances FitzGerald's book and Walter Uhler's remarks on my review.

In his comments on my review Mr. Uhler writes: "These facts alone undermine any argument about the impact on the Soviet Union of a yet-to-be-deployed and perhaps unrealizable missile defense system." Yet, the strategic significance of the Topol-M missile, which he cites as evidence to support his claim, is minor at best. When Mr. Gorbachev spoke to President Reagan in November 1985 about "a response," the Soviet Union had operational over eight thousand ballistic missile warheads, fully half of which had been added since 1979, when the SALT II treaty was signed (and over six thousand of which had been added since SALT I was signed). The Topol-M is a single-warhead missile, developed to replace the aging multiwarhead heavy missiles fielded in earlier decades. By mid-2002 a mere twenty-nine of them have been deployed. In terms of warhead numbers, and in terms of the U.S. space-based defense that was being developed at the same time (which would have negated the SS-27's onboard countermeasures), the case that the SS-27 had much of an impact on U.S. ballistic missile defense plans is the thinnest of reeds.

As for President Reagan's inability to tell the difference between a ballistic missile and a cruise missile (reported third-hand in a footnote in Ms. FitzGerald's book—Robert Timberg quoting Robert McFarlane's account of Secretary George Shultz's assertion), Richard Pipes has addressed this very issue head-on: "Admittedly, Reagan showed little curiosity about [such] data. . . . Nevertheless, he displayed great discernment and the instinctive judgment of a true statesman, being inspired by a strong moral sense and a sound understanding of what it is to live under tyranny. As someone involved in the formulation of Soviet policy in the first two years of the Reagan administration, I can attest that the direction of this policy was set by the president and not by his staff, and that it was vigorously implemented over the objections of several more dovish secretaries. It rested on a keen grasp of the vulnerabilities of the Soviet regime." Should one

care more whether a president exercises strong, courageous leadership or cannot recall the technical differences between missiles?

With respect to the success of SDI as part of the overall strategy to undermine the Soviet system, the wealth of evidence increases almost daily. For example, Russian ambassador Vladimir Lukin asserted (to quote Bud McFarlane again!) that the SDI “accelerated our catastrophe by about five years.”

Mr. Uhler’s parting shot that “no historian should ever misconstrue political and strategic initiatives as automatic political and strategic successes—or strategy as history” mystifies me. One can agree with such a sentiment in the abstract, but relating it to my review—in the absence of any evidence, and in view of the fact that I make no pretensions to being a historian—requires a significant imaginative stretch.

The FitzGeralds and the Uhlers represent the day-before-the-day-before-yesterday’s news. They cannot accept that the Reagan administration had a plan, laid out explicitly in NSDD-75, and pursued it to the eventual demise of the Soviet Union. President Reagan’s lack of interest in the details might be fine fun for the coveys of arms control quails. But who is to say that he was wrong in the key insight that drove, and still propels, ballistic missile defenses—that the American people must be actively defended against all attacks that threaten to kill them in large numbers?

Sometime in the mid-1960s the U.S. government misplaced its compass and embraced Mutual Assured Destruction—it literally went MAD. Ronald Reagan found the compass, but he was unable to convince the arms control community. It was too hung up on the difference between cruise and ballistic missiles, and, like the scientist at Brown University, lost its credibility.



## BOOK REVIEWS

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### HOW INSIGHTFUL CAN THIS BE?

Campbell, Kurt M., and Michèle Flournoy et al. *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign against Terrorism*. Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, 2001. 416pp. \$18.95

As death and taxes are inevitable to citizens of the United States, so also are the contemporary strategic blueprints written *after* a crisis has occurred. In November 2001 the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank that focuses on national security, published *To Prevail*, offering a comprehensive strategy to guide the Bush administration's "global war on terror." From inception to press, the book took less than two months to complete. How insightful can such an "instant" piece of strategic reasoning really be? The answer is "surprisingly so."

*To Prevail* is a decidedly mixed bag of facts, analysis, insight, and recommendations. For example, the chapter on the Taliban appears quaint in light of very recent history (since November 2001). Other chapters, especially those dealing with military and economic issues, come across as shallow and too general for real utility. However, the overall conception of the book and its on-the-mark chapters dealing with intelligence, law enforcement, diplomacy, and foreign assistance make this an invaluable guide to the post-"9/11" national security world.

Reflecting the mixed nature of the book are findings and recommendations in the closing chapter that call for applause but lead to more questions. Meriting applause, the book's recommendations reassert the need for engagement and an active, focused diplomacy with the rest of the world. Readers are reminded that the United States must win this war with the cooperation of a "coalition of coalitions"; that the United States must win the information wars, not only in cyberspace but in the international public forum of debate (the press, television, and the Internet); and that it must pay attention to coordinating its aid efforts to focus such assistance so as to reinforce the public message that the country wishes and needs to send.

Also, *To Prevail* summarizes the intelligence needs for this conflict in ways that are only now being discussed among executive and congressional decision makers. The authors point out the dangerous parochialism within U.S. intelligence agencies and the overwhelming need for more and better human intelligence. This is coupled with the authors' argument for expanded international engagement, for

in the short term, other nations can provide the human intelligence capabilities that the United States currently lacks. Finally, the authors recognize that local and state officials rather than members of the federal government are on the front lines in one major theater of operations—the homeland. Consequently, the book recommends ways of allowing decentralized coordination among federal, state, and local authorities that maintain a balance between the civil rights of the citizenry and the necessity of prosecuting a vigorous campaign.

However, one must ask why—in light of their insightful recognition for the need for an integrated command, control, and coordination of an incredibly diverse repertoire of efforts to fight the war against terrorism—the authors refused to consider any real command and control organization, process, system, or doctrine. In place of such a useful, even vital capability, *To Prevail* merely calls for more commissions, more coordination, and more openness, and information sharing among existing agencies. The authors are Washington veterans who must know how naïve their recommendations on this matter sound. They recommend *against* forming a powerful department of homeland security that would be capable of integrating the diverse and often contradictory and self-defeating efforts of a variety of federal agencies. One never really fully understands who or what the authors are suggesting will conduct the overall campaign planning and oversight of the global war on terror. The fact is that at this writing, it is still not clear which federal entity is conducting the command and control functions of much of the global campaign. This

country learned quickly in World War II that crises alone, even sneak attacks, do not overcome bureaucratic turf wars; the nation is relearning that lesson now. The authors must know this, and they should propose an organizational framework to implement the wide array of global and domestic measures advocated in their strategy.

*To Prevail* is for the serious strategic thinker and decision maker. It is a commendable effort to bring together in one place a comprehensive strategy that can bring success in what promises to be a long and unusual war. My only quibble is the shortage of relevant citations, which is probably due to the quickness of editing and publication. Such is the price of currency.

JON CZARNECKI  
*Naval War College*  
*Monterey Program*



Baylis, John, et al., eds. *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002. 356pp. \$27.95

Although not recognized as an equal academic discipline by mainstream academics, the study of strategy has a long and honorable history—the result of numerous authors who, over the centuries, have developed their ideas and placed their own imprints on the discipline. Since the beginning of the Cold War, when the threat of nuclear destruction concentrated the minds of scholars, the field shifted from traditional military concerns to the study of nuclear deterrence. But now, more than a decade beyond the end of the Cold War, strategic studies return to their

origins, though in a time rife with novel challenges. *Strategy in the Contemporary World* marks a good first step for the discipline.

The editors, strategists all, have assembled a remarkable introduction to strategic studies. Not only is it the first textbook on the subject rather than a collection of edited readings, but it is singularly helpful to the novice. The book addresses a broad array of subjects and may refresh experienced strategists on subjects outside their expertise.

The book's fourteen chapters by seventeen authors have been organized into four sections: "Enduring Issues," "Evolution of Joint Warfare," "Twentieth-Century Theories," and "Contemporary Issues." The subject of each chapter varies tremendously—an introduction to strategic studies; the causes of war; great strategists of the past; land, air, and naval power; terrorism and irregular warfare; international law; deterrence; weapons of mass destruction; technology and warfare; humanitarian intervention; nontraditional security concerns (environmental degradation, etc.); and others.

Each chapter, despite the analytical bias of its author (or authors), explores the fundamentals of its subject fairly well. For example, in "Sea Power: Theory and Practice," Captain Sam Tangredi, USN, traces the historical and theoretical lineage for sea power versus land power. He defines sea power broadly to include maritime trade and ocean resources, and he analyzes the importance of sea lines of communication. Tangredi evaluates the works of Alfred Thayer Mahan and Soviet admiral Sergei Gorshkov as they relate to the debate over naval strategy during the Cold War. He follows this by discussing

naval theory for the post-Cold War era of smaller navies, wider threats, and only one truly global naval power. That is to say, he covers the subject broadly, but with finesse.

The typical problems with multi-authored works are absent in this book. A strong editorial hand has blended the various chapters to read as if the same author had penned them. In addition, the book contains clear introductions and conclusions; key points are summarized in each section; questions are included at the end of each chapter; and further reading references are listed. Students and instructors could make good use of this book.

Only one minor inconsistency mars this otherwise good work. Strategy and strategic studies have long recognized the relationship between politics and war. Karl von Clausewitz wrote that war is a continuation of political discourse by other means. Truth be told, to understand strategy—the art of marrying military means to political ends—one must look constantly to its political origins. The worth of this idea can be seen in the want of it in some of these chapters. For example, in "Arms Control and Disarmament," John Baylis entirely divorces the subject from the politics of nations. Thus when he reports on the charges and countercharges of arms violations between the United States and the Soviet Union during the 1980s, without reference to politics and policies, the states' behaviors appear morally equivalent. In contrast, James D. Kiras emphasizes the political objectives of war in his chapter, "Terrorism and Irregular Warfare," helping the reader to make sense of how unconventional tactics may or may not accomplish certain goals.

This is a minor problem, however. It does not significantly mar an excellent work that will serve anyone desiring grounding in strategic studies or a refresher on strategy.

MARK T. CLARK  
*California State University  
San Bernardino, California*



Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001. 448pp. \$27.95

This monumental and ambitious work sets out to provide the definitive account of the “offensive realism” school of international relations theory. Offensive realism represents a kind of synthesis of the classical realism of Hans Morgenthau and the structural or “defensive” realism of Kenneth Waltz. With Morgenthau it assumes that states (or major states) seek to accumulate as much power as possible for themselves, but it accepts Waltz’s view that the reason they do so lies in the structure of the international system rather than in the human lust for power. Mearsheimer must therefore show that Waltz and his many followers have been overly optimistic in analyzing the implications for state behavior of the anarchic character of the international system. According to Mearsheimer, they have wrongly assumed that a cautious or defensive approach to safeguarding a state’s security is the only rational approach and hence the norm for most states. Rather, he insists, aggressive or expansionist behavior is both more common in the recent history of the great powers than this would allow and more rational in the sense that it is not infrequently very successful.

Mearsheimer’s thesis is richly illustrated, from the history of the great powers from the wars of the French Revolution through the end of the Cold War. It also looks out into the future to test the theory against the common if vaguely articulated belief that great-power war has become obsolete. For these reasons, and because it is written in a clear and jargon-free style, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* holds much interest even for those with limited patience for the theological disputes of international relations theorists. At the same time, it is a formidable challenge to mainstream realism. It scores many points off an approach that somehow never comes to grips with what one is tempted to call the sheer bloody-mindedness of international politics. Particularly novel and persuasive is Mearsheimer’s analysis of “buck passing” (not “bandwagoning”) as the fundamental alternative to balancing against another power.

Yet the book has its limitations, which are largely the limitations of the realist school as such. Mearsheimer never quite convinces when he argues that the domestic regimes and leadership of, for example, Britain, the United States, Nazi Germany, and imperial Japan had no fundamental impact on their international behavior. But perhaps the weakest part of the book is its disregard of the ideological context of nineteenth-century European diplomacy. The anti-revolutionary alliance of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and the “Concert of Europe,” were arguably at least as important in maintaining the long great-power peace through much of this period as were the abstract structural characteristics of the European state system. For that matter, the fact that many of the wars that did occur were connected in some way with

the decay of the Ottoman Empire seems to suggest, contra Mearsheimer, that wars can be caused as much by the weakness as by the strength of a key actor. Both these points have suggestive applications as we look to the twenty-first century. The war against terrorism might well be the occasion for the formation of a global “concert” of the great powers. The greatest threat to such a concert could well be the continuing weakness of Russia—not, as Mearsheimer holds, the rising strength of China.

CARNES LORD  
Naval War College



Kagan, Donald, and Fredrick W. Kagan. *While America Sleeps: Self-Delusion, Military Weakness, and the Threat to Peace Today*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000. 483pp. \$32.50

Did the leadership of the United States throw away a priceless opportunity to bring stability, prosperity, and peace to the world in the decade following the end of the Cold War, as surely as the leadership of Great Britain failed to grasp a similar opportunity following the end of the First World War? For Donald and Fredrick Kagan, the answer is a resounding yes. *While America Sleeps* is their attempt not only to show how opportunities were squandered but also to highlight the similarities of both situations. The Kagans argue that both states dangerously reduced the size of their military forces, falsely believed in the saving power of technology, failed to exercise strategic leadership, and embarked on a pattern of “pseudo-engagement.” The importance of the central question and the

authors' credentials make this a book to be taken seriously.

The Kagans, both historians of note, make a potent father-and-son team. Donald Kagan, the Hillhouse Professor of History and Classics at Yale University, has produced an impressive body of work, including the best-selling *A History of Warfare*. Fredrick W. Kagan, currently a professor of military history at West Point, is perhaps less well known to the general public but has impressive credentials in his own right.

*While America Sleeps* is divided into three sections. The first, “Britain between the Wars,” chronicles that state's transition from a globally dominant power in 1918 to one of near-fatal weakness by the mid-1930s. It pays special attention to the Chanak crisis of 1922, the Corfu affair of 1923, the Locarno Treaty of 1925, the Italian-Ethiopian War of 1934–35, and the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936. The second, “The United States after the Cold War,” follows a generally similar approach, addressing particularly the end of the Gulf War in 1991, the U.S. intervention in Somalia from 1991 to 1993, the occupation of Haiti in 1994, the Clinton administration's attempts to deal with North Korea's nuclear weapons program, that same administration's efforts to curtail Iraqi production of weapons of mass destruction, and American responses to conflict in the Balkans. The true third section, although actually included in the second section of the book, is the concluding chapter, in which the authors clearly state their belief that the United States is at risk of “suffering a fate similar to that which befell Britain in the 1930s.” They present an argument supporting this conclusion and

offer the chilling suggestion that it may already be too late to prevent such an outcome.

*While America Sleeps* is rich in background material. Defense strategies, budgets, building programs, and much more are fully and clearly discussed. For example, the section on how both the United States and the United Kingdom turned to technology as compensation for diminished force structure is fascinating. Readers will find compelling the portraits of both countries, depicted as states weary of conflict, desirous of maintaining dominance at the lowest possible cost, and eventually relying too heavily on inadequately led and maintained diplomatic services.

Some areas of *While America Sleeps* are open to criticism. One potential failing is that explaining how events between 1919 and the mid-1930s led to war is a very different thing from explaining how different events would have led to peace. Also, the authors do not address in detail the severe domestic political opposition that choosing a different strategy might have encountered; such difficulties are mentioned only to remark they could have been overcome. There are also discrepancies. The authors imply, for example, that President Bill Clinton was never able to bring himself to order an invasion of Haiti, that U.S. forces were only "prepared" to invade. In reality the forces described were actually in the process of invasion when the military regime of General Raoul Cedras yielded to U.S. negotiators.

Some of the authors' subjective interpretations are also open to debate. The Kagans are critical of British leaders in 1936 for being overly fearful of the Italian navy should British opposition to Italy's conquest of Abyssinia lead to

conflict. Yet it is hard to see how Britain could *not* have been concerned with Italian naval power. The Italian ships were new and well handled, and they would have had air support for any operation near the Italian Peninsula. In a more modern example, the decision not to force the landing of the USS *Harlan County* (LST 1196) at Port-au-Prince during the confrontation with Haiti is strongly criticized. There is no doubt that the image of a U.S. Navy warship backing away from a government-directed mob did not reflect credit upon the United States or its military forces. However, the authors might have more fully explored the potential consequences of a forcible landing. The ship was there on a noncombatant mission, with the ostensible permission of the Cedras regime. If a landing had been carried out, potentially killing many Haitians, significant domestic and international repercussions could have been expected to result. Additionally, it is unlikely that the original mission could then have been carried out at all.

One last criticism deserves mention. As Richard Neustadt and Ernest May have long reminded us, all analogies are suspect. The power of analogies is so great that arguments by analogy almost inevitably result in flawed decision making. This is in large part because all too often historical analogies invoked as decision aids are shallow circumstantially and far more different from the situation at hand than they are similar. Yet once the analogy has been invoked the damage often has been done, and the course of action suggested will be followed to its unsatisfactory end. To their credit the Kagans remind the reader that "the United States at the end of the millennium is not England between the wars."



They point out that comparisons of present policies to those of the British at Munich are premature and that it is not their intention to draw precise parallels between the British and U.S. experiences. However, these admissions come only in the very last chapter, after the reader has had every opportunity to make just such comparisons.

Despite these critical comments, *While America Sleeps* is very much worth reading. The Kagans are asking the right questions. Their warnings about the fate of states that reduce military capabilities to dangerously low levels, lack consistent strategic visions, and replace sound strategy with wishful thinking are more germane than ever.

So too are the questions their work points to but does not ask. Can democracies avoid reducing military capabilities without the impetus of a visible external threat? Does state behavior motivated by self-interest weaken all alliances over time? Can a democracy survive taking on the mantle of world policeman? Can wars be prevented through consistent displays of strength and purpose? These are questions that reading this book evokes, questions that should be considered and discussed far more than they are.

RICHARD NORTON  
Naval War College



Detter, Ingrid. *The Law of War*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000. (2d ed.) 516pp. \$39.95

This is the second edition of Ingrid Detter's sweeping survey of the law relating to the "modern state of war." The first edition, published in 1987, was then

reviewed by, among others, Professors Howard Levie (*American Journal of International Law*, vol. 83 [1989], p. 194) and Leslie Green (*Canadian Yearbook of International Law* [1988], p. 473), two distinguished former holders of the Stockton Chair of International Law at the Naval War College. Both reviewers identified numerous inaccuracies and misreadings of source documents. The second edition is intended to explore the changing legal context of modern warfare since 1987. A reader interested in this edition should first read the earlier reviews. Regrettably, the representative deficiencies pointed out by Levie and Green still persist, and a fully balanced discussion of particularly important legal issues is lacking.

Typical errors left unchanged include Detter's erroneous position regarding the treatment of prisoners of war. She states that the 1949 "Geneva Convention III on Prisoners of War specifies [in Article 4] that there need be no fighting for the Convention to apply; it is sufficient for persons to be captured." There is no such provision in the convention. Detter also continues to assert that the convention provides that prisoners of war must not be subjected to interrogation, because Article 17 obliges prisoners to provide only their name, rank, date of birth, and serial number. Article 17, however, then continues, proscribing physical or mental torture, or any other form of coercion, to secure information from prisoners of war. Interrogation short of such prohibited actions is not prohibited by the convention. While a prisoner of war is required to give the identifying information, international law does not prohibit a prisoner from giving more than this, nor a captor from seeking more—so long as torture is not used.



Astonishingly, Detter continues to insist that the actions taken during the Korean War never had authorization from the United Nations. She states that the military operations were only “a collective security action of certain States, as there was no actual UN authorization for the action.” She asserts further that “the troops operating under the aegis of the United Nations in Korea may not have been forces of the United Nations as the decision to take action had been taken without the vote of the former Soviet Union, a permanent member of the UN Security Council.” Detter continues, “The units were probably troops of the collective operation of the Western powers, but as such, detached from their respective home States and placed under a collective command which, at least on an ad hoc basis, functioned as an international organization.”

As noted by Levie in his review, the legally significant actions taken by the Security Council were in Resolution 1511 of 27 June 1950, calling on all members to offer assistance to the Republic of Korea, and Resolution 1588 of 7 July 1950, requesting that members offering assistance do so through a unified command under the United States and authorizing it to use the United Nations flag. That the Soviet Union chose to boycott Security Council meetings was significant politically but not legally with respect to the actions taken by the Security Council in authorizing action under Article 42 in Korea.

It is bewildering that Detter in the second edition did not make the proper corrections about both the Prisoner of War Convention and the legal basis of the Korean conflict, given the prominence and qualifications of the earlier critical reviewers.

The last passage above also illustrates Detter’s distracting tendency to mix personal opinions with legal analysis, which does little to present a balanced view of the state of the law. In discussing the basis for intervention by Nato in Kosovo, Detter describes Kosovo as “a province of Yugoslavia which . . . sought, and deserved” autonomy from Serbia. She argues that nonstate “groups” should be allowed to adhere to treaties on the law of war, reasoning that “it is important to abolish the unequal idiosyncrasy that States are bound by obligations under the Law of War by treaties but groups, because of their inequality, are not.” Moreover, she states that “much has been written about the ambit of article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter [which prohibits the threat or use of force by members in their relations with each other]; there is above all an area of doubt as to whether the article covers economic force.” The issue whether economic force is included in the Article 2(4) prohibition (it is not) was settled long ago—it is not at all an area of doubt.

Claiming that the second edition is intended to incorporate changes since 1987, Detter provides disappointingly little discussion on information operations. In less than two pages, she notes that information technology has introduced a new form of warfare and that collateral damage to nonmilitary targets is a risk of information operations. Much more could have been presented about when information operations constitute a use of force under Article 2(4), when a state may consider an information attack an armed attack and respond in self-defense under Article 51 of the charter, or how the law regulating the use of force applies to information

operations. While little was written in the late 1980s and early 1990s about the international legal issues associated with information operations, a cottage industry on the topic has grown over the latter part of the decade, and Detter's book suffers without a fuller discussion of this topic.

Detter's treatment of the law of naval warfare is similarly incomplete. She fails to include discussion of modern maritime interception operations beyond a cursory mention of the coalition operations conducted in the Arabian Gulf since 1991, and she only briefly covers the UN-authorized operations in Haiti and the Balkans. Although NATO's operations in Kosovo are discussed at great length in other parts of the book, Detter does not address the vigorous debate that ensued among NATO members about the propriety of interdicting delivery of refined oil intended for Yugoslavia. Some NATO members believed that the authority to do so was based on the belligerent right of visit and search, while others claimed that NATO was not involved in an international armed conflict, a predicate for the belligerent right. With respect to maritime war zones, Detter states that "defensive" war zones are allowed if they do not extend for more than twelve miles offshore and are effectively supervised, while "offensive" zones, in which merchant ships are sunk, are illegal even if warnings are provided. Both these statements are patently wrong. Customary international law provides that within the immediate area of naval operations, a belligerent may establish special restrictions on the activities of neutral vessels and aircraft and may prohibit altogether such vessels and aircraft from entering the area. The "immediate area" or vicinity of naval operations is

that area within which hostilities are taking place or belligerent forces are actually operating. Such an area could exceed twelve miles and could also be in some location other than near the shore of one belligerent. Additionally, while merchant shipping generally enjoys greater protection from targeting than enemy warships, it is not an absolute protection. Under particularly defined exceptions, merchant shipping is liable to being targeted by a belligerent.

Detter also concludes, concerning the torpedoing of the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* by the submarine HMS *Conqueror* when both were outside the British total-exclusion zone during the Falklands War, that it was "highly questionable whether the sinking was compatible with international law, especially as the [warship] was heading for its home base and posed no threat to the British armed forces." This too is a misstatement of the law. Generally, enemy warships are subject to attack, destruction, or capture anywhere beyond neutral territory. Thus the sinking of *Belgrano*, even beyond the declared British total exclusion zone, was a legitimate act of war.

Conspicuously absent from Detter's assessment of the law of naval warfare is any citation or reference to the International Institute on Humanitarian Law's *Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflict at Sea* (the *San Remo Manual*). The *San Remo Manual*, issued in 1994 and published in 1995, is a contemporary restatement of the law applicable to armed conflicts at sea. It was compiled by a panel of international law experts from various countries as an attempt to restate the customary and treaty law of naval warfare. It is not binding authority on states, but it is nonetheless

persuasive evidence of the current law. The United States does not agree with every provision in the manual, nor does any other state. Still, it is a fundamental source document that must be considered in any discussion of the law of naval warfare. As such, it is inexcusable of Detter not to cite it. Failing to do so detracts greatly from the text. Using the manual would have provided balance, and familiarity with it should have helped to avoid the errors described.

In Leslie Green's review of Detter's first edition, he concluded that "regrettably, it can hardly be said that Dr. Detter De Lupis' *Law of War* provides the reader with any real practical account of 'the body of rules which regulates relationships in war.' " Levie, after devastatingly recounting the representative errors and inaccuracies in the first edition, left to the reader to judge "whether [these errors] are important or unimportant, could a political leader or a military commander accept and rely on advice based upon this volume as authority?" Unfortunately, the passage of more than ten years and the addition of new information do not warrant improving these two assessments of Detter's *The Law of War*. Like the first edition, the second is not a very useful book if one is looking for a basic understanding of the law of war, nor is it helpful in advancing the development of that law.

GREG O'BRIEN  
*Commander, JAGC, USN*  
*Naval War College*



Podvig, Pavel, ed. *Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001. 692pp. \$45

This comprehensive encyclopedia of all Russian (and Soviet) nuclear weapons systems deserves attention not only because all earlier versions were confiscated by the Russian Security Service (FSB) but because it is a complete and authoritative chronology of the weapons, warheads, and delivery systems that enabled the Soviet Union to achieve "superpower" status. Authored by Russian physicists and mathematicians using only unclassified data bases, the book tells the "official" story of how Soviet and Russian bureaucracies built the world's most fearsome nuclear arsenal from World War II until the mid-1990s.

Organized by function and military services, the story is easy to follow for a reader reasonably conversant with the systems and willing to plow through tables and specifications. The book's objective, clinical, and dispassionate treatment is both its strongest and weakest point. It presents all the facts. The data presented in the tables and notes probably could not have been fabricated at this level of detail. However, the book makes no judgments or any effort to place its contents in political context.

The chapter on the Soviet navy details how technology shaped strategy. The development of the R-29 sea-launched ballistic missile (Nato's SS-N-8) and the Project 667B (Nato's Delta I) submarine put the Soviet ballistic submarine force within range of its American targets while remaining in the "bastions" of the ice-covered regions of the Arctic, thus obviating the need for the "Yankee patrols" (by Yankee-type submarines carrying SS-N-6 missiles). With only one-third of the range of the SS-N-8, the SS-N-6 missile was a threat only when it was brought near the U.S. coast, where the submarine could be constantly

targeted by antisubmarine warfare forces. American naval strategists of this era can take satisfaction in having correctly postulated that the central purpose of the entire Soviet navy was to support the submerged missile forces, particularly the Deltas and their successors near the Soviet coasts.

The authors dispassionately and authoritatively document the eventual decay of the Soviet land-based and sea-based strategic nuclear edifice. Perhaps this is why the FSB has declared the book a work of espionage. In fact, one of its authors, Igor Sutyagin, was arrested and held on charges related to his research for the book. Yet it is cold comfort even for an American reader to note the degeneration of the Russian early-warning satellite system or the pollution hazard caused by the way in which the nuclear submarine fleet was deactivated.

The table on nuclear testing provides a keen insight into the mindset of the Soviet decision-making elite, as well as the efficacy of focused, centralized planning. The sheer size of the program and its reckless disregard for the environment persuasively show the political power of the Soviet nuclear-industrial complex. The hundred pages devoted to this program make clear its importance. Of particular note, the Soviets conducted 135 nuclear explosions for industrial or other "peaceful" purposes. In fact, the Lazurit explosion of 1974 moved enough earth to form a dam.

The authors offer no apologies for the huge building programs or for the Soviet Union's unabashed desire to prevail in the Cold War arms race. While the book is not overtly political, one senses that the authors believe the governmental pronouncements justifying the building or destruction of each weapon. They

make numerous allusions to the Soviet desire to adhere to international agreements, and to American perfidy as forcing the Soviets to build all of this weaponry. There is sadness in the discussion of the demise of the Russian strategic program, brought about by the dire economic situation facing Russia and the loss of Soviet republics as newly independent states, and with them the Soviet test ranges.

Nonetheless, this book should not be read for its political message. It is a well referenced storehouse of knowledge on Soviet strategic systems, useful to researchers and historians alike. Against its own standards, it is a remarkable accomplishment.

TOM FEDYSZYN  
*Naval War College*



Lowenthal, Mark M. *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Quarterly, 1999. 264pp. \$28.95

Mark Lowenthal's professed intent in writing this book was to fulfill the need for an introductory text for students of intelligence. He is well qualified to do so, having devoted more than twenty years in the executive and legislative branches of government as an intelligence official and as an adjunct professor in graduate programs at Columbia and George Washington Universities. (He is now the vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council for Evaluation.) The resulting work is much more than an introductory textbook; it is a trove of valuable information and insights ranging from the basic concepts and definitions of intelligence to a thorough examination of the intelligence process.

Thus not only is this an excellent textbook on the basics of intelligence and ideal for a course in Intelligence 101, but it is also an interesting and informative examination of intelligence and national security disciplines, one that would be of interest and value to national security “old-timers.”

This book addresses the fundamental issue of what “intelligence” is and what it is not, and it offers a detailed examination of the processes involved in the practice of intelligence—collection disciplines, analysis, counterintelligence, covert action, the role of the policy maker, oversight and accountability, and the ethical and moral issues generated by intelligence practice. Lowenthal provides an abbreviated but enlightening history of the development of the U.S. intelligence community, as well as a summary of significant historical intelligence developments since the creation of the Coordinator of Information and the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. There is not only a helpful examination of the structure of the U.S. intelligence community (with the obligatory wiring diagrams) but also an interesting description of the relationships between and among the players in the community, including the important stakeholders in the budgetary process.

Throughout the book, Lowenthal has inserted sidebars containing brief descriptions and vignettes summarizing the more detailed material in the text; these add a certain panache to the work. He also discusses historical examples of intelligence successes and failures, to illustrate the various concepts and insights he has mentioned. At the end of each chapter Lowenthal lists “key terms” unique to the profession, as well as additional readings. He has also included the

key provisions of the National Security Act of 1947, Executive Order 12333, and the Senate resolution that established the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; all these are helpful for ready reference.

Lowenthal provides an interesting and valuable examination of the “syndromes” that sometimes affect the analyst, resulting in a faulty analysis and product. Most interesting is the “mirror-imaging” syndrome, in which the analyst erroneously presumes that other states will act in the same way as the United States would—Pearl Harbor is a classic example. Throughout the book, Lowenthal emphasizes the importance of the role of the policy maker and the fact that the purpose of intelligence is to support the policy makers who run the government. He also notes the converse responsibility of policy makers to provide clear and unambiguous requirements to the intelligence community.

In his chapter on covert action, Lowenthal characterizes these activities as “something between the states of peace and war.” That may not be entirely accurate, since covert action may consist entirely of nonforcible measures. Nevertheless, his description of the covert-action process and his examination of the ethical issues that are raised in connection with it are right on the mark. However, one would have liked a bit more discussion on what *does not* constitute covert action. For example, section 503(e)(2) of the National Security Act of 1947 exempts “traditional military activities” from the definition of covert action, while in the *Senate Report on the 1991 Intelligence Authorization Act*, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence went to some length to describe those activities, including “almost every use of uniformed military forces . . . whether or

not the U.S. sponsorship of such activities is apparent or later to be acknowledged publicly.” More along these lines would perhaps reveal that policy makers have quite a bit more flexibility in responding to overseas events and that covert action is not the only option between inaction and the overt use of force. But this is a mere quibble.

In sum, Lowenthal has written an outstanding primer on intelligence, the intelligence process, and the intelligence community.

W. H. DALTON  
Department of Defense  
Associate Deputy General Counsel, Intelligence



Lerner, Mitchell B., *The Pueblo Incident: A Spy Ship and the Failure of American Foreign Policy*. Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2002. 320pp. \$34.95

Finally, an author has done a hard-hitting analysis of the USS *Pueblo* incident of January 1968. Mitchell B. Lerner, an assistant professor of history at Ohio State University, does not exonerate the commanding officer of the *Pueblo*, Commander Lloyd M. Bucher, for giving up the ship and crew, and the intelligence it had gathered. However, of all those who may have been culpable, Commander Bucher emerges a hero and is no longer the scapegoat his superiors made him out to be. Exhaustive research, including access to new information released from the Lyndon Johnson White House files, leads Lerner to place blame evenly on the shoulders of the Navy chain of command, the intelligence community, and Johnson's foreign policy advisors, due to their misunderstanding and underestimation of

the North Korean–Soviet Union relationship.

Lerner asserts that the intelligence collection effort, code-named Operation CLICKBEETLE, was the idea of the National Security Agency and that it had been patterned after the efforts of the Soviet Union's intelligence-collection ships (AGIs) off the coast of the United States. Deciding that the Navy should be the operational commander for this strategic tasking, the National Security Agency turned the program over to it. Converting tired, old, and slow cargo ships into intelligence collection platforms with insufficient money, inadequate self-defense, little more than fresh coats of paint, minimal training, and inadequate safeguards for the sensitive intelligence equipment on board, the Navy mismanaged the effort from the outset. The maladies that befell the USS *Liberty* in 1967 off the coast of Israel were repeated in the preparation and tasking of *Pueblo* just seven months later off the Korean Peninsula.

The USS *Pueblo* had been tasked to collect signals intelligence in the Sea of Japan using the “cover” of conducting hydrographic research. The operation had been deemed to be of minimal risk, based on the analogy of the Soviet AGIs. Lerner contends that whenever an AGI violated territorial waters, the U.S. Navy would turn it around with an admonishment and no more. Would not the North Koreans do the same? Herein rested the Navy's greatest miscalculation. The Koreans were not the puppets of the Soviet Union or its foreign policy executors. Lerner goes to great lengths to take the reader inside the mind of Kim Il Sung and his vision of communism and the greater glory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.



Shortly after the operation got under way, the North Korean navy reacted with surprise and precision. Commander Bucher, armed only with a few .50-caliber machine guns aboard his slow vessel, surrendered the *Pueblo* after stalling his pursuers for only sixty-five minutes. Inadequate destruction equipment and too much unnecessary classified material on board led to an intelligence coup for North Korea. One U. S. sailor lost his life during the short resistance. The defensive cover that was to have been provided by the Navy and the Air Force in response to calls from the *Pueblo* never came. The Navy and the Johnson administration missed all the indications and warnings that such a fate could befall the *Pueblo*, even after recognizing that the Pyongyang regime had violated the demilitarized zone more than fifty times, ambushed U.S. and allied ground forces, attempted to assassinate the president of the Republic of Korea (with a secondary target to be the American embassy), and in the preceding nine months seized twenty South Korean fishing vessels for “entering North Korean territorial waters.”

Lerner then brings the reader briefly into the brutal interrogation rooms of the communist regime and the eleven-month negotiations that finally resulted in the release of the crew in December 1968. Kim Il Sung used the captured vessel and its crew to further his domestic agenda and drive for greater nationalism. His negotiators remained steadfast in their demands that the United States admit that the *Pueblo* had violated North Korea’s territorial waters—it had not—and that the American government apologize to the citizens of North Korea and assure Kim Il Sung that the violations would never happen again.

Meanwhile, President Johnson could not negotiate the return of the crew without considering a host of broader international considerations, most notably the war in Vietnam. Lerner concisely weaves together the competing national foreign policy objectives to ensure that South Korea remained an active ally in South Vietnam while simultaneously keeping the United States out of another conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

While negotiations dragged on, there was little interest from the American public: the increasingly unpopular Vietnam War, the struggle for civil rights, the campaign for the equal rights for women, two political assassinations, and the decision of the incumbent president to forgo a second term all diverted the attention of the American public and relegated the *Pueblo* negotiations to the back pages of the newspapers and in most cases erased them altogether.

Lerner presents such a thorough explanation of the entire incident that it is unnecessary to belabor here the findings of the Navy’s court of inquiry. This important historical analysis provides the reader with a better understanding of the impact of seemingly harmless operations on the conduct of foreign policy. More importantly, the book demonstrates the critical importance of intelligence collection, analysis of indications and warnings, and the effects that ignoring such crucial information may have on not only fighting forces but the nation’s interests.

DANIEL J. BRENNOCK  
*Captain, U.S. Navy*





Freeman, Gregory A. *Sailors to the End: The Deadly Fire on the USS Forrestal and the Heroes Who Fought It*. New York: William Morrow, 2002. 293pp. \$25.95

Since its release in 1973, the training film *Trial by Fire* has been seen by hundreds of thousands of officers and sailors during mandatory shipboard firefighting training—training improved in no small part by the lessons learned from the *Forrestal* tragedy. Undoubtedly many (this reviewer among them) have wondered what it must have been like to have been on the *Forrestal* that hot July day in 1967 when the crew fought to save their ship. Through interviews with survivors, relatives of victims, and the meticulous mining of official U.S. Navy files, Gregory Freeman, former Associated Press reporter turned freelance journalist, seeks to capture the human emotions of the day and explore the question of why this tragedy happened. Weaving a thoroughly engaging, often riveting tale as seen through the eyes of selected *Forrestal* sailors, Freeman fully meets his remit while describing the role that chance played that day in selecting who would live and who would die. He concludes, justly, that this was a tragedy that need not have happened, and in doing so he focuses on a causal factor—World War II-era thousand-pound bombs—that has been less fully recognized until now.

The book is divided into three major sections. The first six chapters introduce the *Forrestal* crewmen who play key roles in Freeman's story. For the civilian reader, this section will serve as a primer to life in the U.S. Navy in general, and to duty onboard an aircraft carrier specifically. It is also in this section that the

few flaws in the book are found. Perhaps invisible to the layman, errors—such as calling a commander a “high-ranking enlisted man” or stating that “landing without killing anybody or causing damage usually got you an OK grade” (generations of aviators wish it were so)—will jump out at the informed reader. While small, the errors do distract from an otherwise meticulously researched book.

The next eight chapters form the heart of the book. Here Freeman accelerates the pace, using literary snapshots taken through the eyes of the crew members to build an appreciation of the tension and fear felt on board the carrier that day. At 1051 on 29 July 1967, a Zuni air-to-ground rocket fired from an F-4 Phantom near the aft end of the flight deck, knocking off a fuel tank hung beneath an A-4 Skyhawk among Air Wing 17 aircraft preparing for a major strike in Vietnam. While certainly unexpected, the initial response to the Zuni launch and the resultant fire was by the book—a situation that changed dramatically with the explosion (just ninety-four seconds later) of the first thousand-pound bomb. In stark and realistic terms Freeman describes the efforts over the next twenty hours of Captain John Beling and his well-meaning but inexperienced crew to ensure that their ship would survive. These 150 pages are exceptionally engaging and so successful in capturing the stress and emotion of the crisis that they grab readers and leave them emotionally exhausted. In particular, the description of the death of sailor James Blaskis in a remote and inaccessible part of the ship cannot leave a reader unmoved. One hundred thirty-three other *Forrestal* crew members and air wing personnel were killed; many died heroically.

The final three-chapter section deals with the aftermath. The cause of the fire must be investigated, answers found, survivors treated, the dead buried, and the ship re-find its soul. Freeman describes well the aftermath of the tragedy and the difficulty finding the truth when some of the men had become primarily concerned with themselves.

In the end the official causes were determined. Independently, two shipboard groups had each bypassed one of two in-place safety features, confident that the other would suffice. Additionally, obsolete and less fire-resistant bombs had been transferred to *Forrestal* and loaded on the attack aircraft that morning—a point not fully explored previously. While no specific personal blame was assigned, without the negative synergy created by the convergence of these three decisions this would most likely have been just another unremarkable and short-lived flight-deck fire.

JAMES E. HICKEY  
Commander, U.S. Navy  
Naval War College



Weir, Gary E. *An Ocean in Common: American Naval Officers, Scientists, and the Ocean Environment*. College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 2001. 403pp. \$44.95

Gary Weir has scored another hit. Using the approach he fashioned in *Forged in War: The Naval-Industrial Complex and American Submarine Construction, 1940–1961*, the head of the Contemporary Branch of the Naval Historical Center has turned his keen analytical mind and sharp sense of political realism to the linked topics of the U.S. Navy and the practical science of oceanography.

The book is divided into three chronological segments: from World War I to 1940, the Second World War, and the Cold War up to the administration of President John F. Kennedy. In each of these eras the submarine exerted a transforming impact on naval strategy and operations. The revolution began in 1914, when the U-boat explosively demonstrated the magnitude of its threat to the security of transatlantic shipping and to the political survival of Great Britain. The German undersea offensive and the resultant Anglo-American antisubmarine warfare (ASW) forcibly introduced an unwelcome third dimension into combat at sea, the comprehension of which exceeded the professional and technological competence of even the best-educated American naval officers. The massive, opaque, and largely uncharted subsurface domain could be mastered as a theater for warfare only if the Navy enlisted the expertise of oceanographers, who themselves represented little more than a loosely organized multidisciplinary specialty operating on the fringe of institutional academic respectability. If the Navy needed their expertise in order to fight underwater, the oceanographers needed the Navy's funding in order to prosper in academe.

Weir begins his analysis of the submarine as the *deus ex machina* of twentieth century, oceanographically determined maritime warfare with a New York meeting on antisubmarine warfare chaired by the inventor Thomas Alva Edison in March 1917. The specialists at the gathering, Weir writes, "concluded that underwater sound and echo ranging offered the most promising avenue of exploration for ASW scientists in the war effort. Physics and physical oceanography thus immediately became vital to

the national war effort.” As a result, the characteristics of sound transmission beneath the surface of the oceans, especially the effects exerted by thermal layers, became the focus of scientific research sponsored by the Navy. By 1918 the resulting underwater sound-sensing and transmission systems had “helped keep the U-boats at bay.”

World War I ended less than two years after the United States entered, and for a few years thereafter it seemed as if the wartime spirit of cooperation in the naval-scientific inquiry into oceanography’s utility to naval warfare would continue. However, the Republican era was a time of American isolationism and naval retrenchment, and by 1924 the budgetary axe had decapitated the fledgling naval-scientific hybrid. A revival of the joint effort by scientists and the Navy did not come until 1940, but not until the attack on Pearl Harbor did the fiscal floodgates of defense spending on such topics truly swing open.

In the Second World War the final form of American naval oceanography began to emerge. Just as the submarine is the weapons system around which Weir weaves his story, his concept of a cultural clash between naval officers and scientists constitutes his institutional or political theme. Still, as Weir points out, “Effective submariners and ASW officers soon realized that applied oceanography improved a ship’s chance of survival and increased the likelihood that crewmembers would again see their families after a difficult North Atlantic convoy or a submarine patrol near the Japanese home islands.” Besides patriotic motivation, the scientists hoped that memory of “the profitable wartime application of oceanography and the lives spared in combat would induce the Navy to

become the generous patron” of postwar oceanography.

That was how it turned out, but only because the unanticipated Soviet submarine threat provided an irresistible impetus for many shrewd oceanographers and some astute naval officers who served as the “translators” between their respective cultures. The two groups cooperated for mutual and national benefit in the Cold War, but the cultures of the warrior and the scientist remained as separate as oil in water. Their testimonials were parallel, not unified—the invincibility of U.S. fast-attack and fleet ballistic missile submarines for the Navy, and the intellectual fecundity of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography for science.

This book is not light reading, but it is invaluable to every serious student of naval strategy, weapons systems, and the marine environment that shapes and limits modern warfare at sea.

KENNETH J. HAGAN  
Naval War College  
Monterey Program



Krug, Hans-Joachim, et al. *Reluctant Allies: German-Japanese Naval Relations in World War II*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2001. 456pp. \$38.95

With the exception of Carl Boyd, John Chapman, Gerhard Krebbs, and Bernd Martin, historians have largely ignored German-Japanese relations in general and naval relations in particular. (A further exception would be Werner Rahn; see his “Japan and Germany, 1941–1943: No Common Objective, No Common Plans, No Basis of Trust,” in

the Summer 1993 issue of this journal.) That gap in the literature has now been filled by this collection of essays by four eminent German and Japanese naval officers and historians: Hans-Joachim Krug, Yōichi Hiram, Berthold J. Sander-Nagashima, and Axel Niestlé. Each contributes from his research specialty, and the product is a welcome re-examination of a “missed opportunity” based on sources in British, German, Japanese, and U.S. archives.

Part I consists of a historical overview and analysis of German-Japanese naval cooperation by Captain Krug, German Navy, and Admiral Hiram, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. Their message is straightforward—there never existed real cooperation between Berlin and Tokyo, as each side was intent merely to use the other to further its own power-political agenda. This is as true for the Anti-Comintern Pact of November 1936 as it is for the follow-up Agreement for Cultural Cooperation of November 1939. Various technical, joint, and military affairs committees were eventually formed, mainly for “propaganda purposes”; they never met before Pearl Harbor and thereafter only “for protocol and courtesy.” The result was a “reluctant” alliance. In August 1939 Adolph Hitler did not tell the Japanese of Germany’s nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union until two days before its signing. In April 1941 Hitler refused to inform the visiting Japanese foreign minister, Yosuke Matsuoka, of his decision to invade the Soviet Union. Matsuoka, in turn, did not inform the Germans that on his way home he would sign a neutrality pact with the Soviets. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor came as a complete surprise to the Germans. Hastily arranged joint warfare

agreements among the three Axis powers on 11 December 1941 and 18 January 1942 brought few concrete measures.

Much of the book rests on the detailed radio transmissions of the German naval attachés in Tokyo, Admiral Paul Wenneker and Captain Joachim Lietzmann. These show that even in the area of possible joint operations in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, there was mutual mistrust and jealousy. This stemmed from lack of prior cooperation, racial arrogance (by both sides), linguistic difficulties, and especially the fact that German auxiliary merchant cruisers and submarines had to diesel more than thirteen thousand miles across a hundred degrees of longitude en route to the Far East. Admiral Karl Dönitz reduced the cargo capacity of U-boats by insisting that they carry full loads of torpedoes; he refused to share German weapons and equipment technology with the Japanese until August 1944, and then only at Hitler’s insistence. In the Indian Ocean, the one place where German and Japanese naval forces might have been able to coordinate operations, nothing of the sort eventuated.

Part II, by Sander-Nagashima, a German naval officer and historian, fleshes out much of the above. Sander-Nagashima first analyzes the command structure of both navies and then examines technical and personnel matters (“Cooperation with Caution”). He is especially critical of German duplicity in continuing to supply Chiang Kai-shek with military material in large quantities and in building submarines for China, stating that they were for Germany—in the process “purposefully fooling the befriended Japanese.” Perhaps in return, the Japanese refused to give direct help to German warships in the Far East; supplies,

until 22 June 1941, had to be shipped via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. In the final analysis, Sander-Nagashima concludes, naval cooperation between the two allies was restricted to “the limitation of the operational zones through 70 degrees east longitude.”

Part III, written by Niestlé, a businessman and author of numerous works on German U-boats, details the meager logistical exchanges between Berlin and Tokyo. In terms of passengers traveling by transport ship, a mere twenty-one people went from Europe to Japan, and not quite nine hundred from the Far East to Europe; by submarine, the totals are ninety-six and eighty-nine, respectively. In terms of material exchanges, in 1941–42 Japan shipped 104,233 tons to Germany, of which 19,200 were lost; in 1942–43 half the 104,700 tons shipped was lost. Of the goods shipped in both directions by submarines, only between 20 and 40 percent ever arrived. While the Germans were anxious for deliveries of rubber and precious metals, the Japanese requested industrial products, technical equipment, and chemical goods. Part IV consists of a conclusion by Sander-Nagashima.

My criticisms of this superb work are but two. First, the fact that it has four authors writing separate sections has resulted in a good deal of overlap, retelling various aspects of the story. Second, the title does not do the book justice; it was hardly a “reluctant” alliance but rather a hollow, empty, or wasted one.

HOLGER H. HERWIG  
*University of Calgary*



Herwig, Holger H., and David J. Bercuson. *The Destruction of the Bismarck*. Overlook, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 2001. 314pp. \$35

Rhys-Jones, Graham. *The Loss of the Bismarck: An Avoidable Disaster*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2000. 272pp. \$32.95

During the early evening hours of 22 May 1941, the German battleship *Bismarck* departed Bergen, Norway, to face the might of the Royal Navy with only the heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen* in company. It was to be the battleship's first and only operational deployment. Five days later, the ship went down with over a thousand of its crew.

Considered then to be the world's most powerful battleship, *Bismarck* entered the Atlantic when Britain was stretched almost to the breaking point. With the critical Battle of the Atlantic hanging in the balance, the pursuit and sinking of *Bismarck* was one of the war's most dramatic episodes; many books and a movie were dedicated to it. Those early works, written mostly within twenty years after the war, focused almost entirely on the operation itself. None devoted attention to the strategies, political aspects, or operational and politico-strategic backgrounds that shaped the battleship's deployment and the Allied responses to it.

That void has now been filled by the two books under review, *The Destruction of the Bismarck*, by Holger Herwig and David Bercuson, and *The Loss of the Bismarck: An Avoidable Disaster*, by Graham Rhys-Jones. Both books bring new information and fresh perspectives to the tale, putting *Bismarck's* operation in its strategic context. In doing so, the authors highlight the strategic impact of the potential outcomes of Operation RHINE, the code name for *Bismarck's*

sortie. Perhaps more importantly, these books expose the domestic political, the operational, and the military-strategic considerations that drove much of the protagonists' decision making. The books, however, differ in their approaches.

Holger H. Herwig and David J. Bercuson are prominent, widely published historians who coauthored an earlier book on an Atlantic Ocean engagement in World War II. Prior to their recent collaborations, they had specialized in German naval history and Canadian military history, respectively. Both live and teach in Canada, and for the most part they write from a western Atlantic perspective; as a result they have incorporated U.S. planning and activities related to *Bismarck*'s deployment and how U.S. naval operations affected the planning of the German navy's commander, Grand Admiral Erich Raeder—a heretofore unexplored topic. They also provide detailed, comprehensive treatment of the domestic political considerations behind Raeder's thinking and the staff's response to his direction and requirements, recounting the German naval staff's extensive objections to Operation RHINE, its timing, and the results of their predeployment gaming of the operation. The book then shifts to a lively but traditional narrative of the battleship's deployment and loss.

*The Loss of the Bismarck* takes a more Euro-centric view of the battleship's deployment, focusing on the overall Anglo-German strategic picture, with special emphasis on Russia and the Mediterranean. Moreover, it presents the pursuit and engagement of *Bismarck* from a naval command perspective, highlighting the operational picture, available to the commanders on both sides. The contending naval doctrines and missions are explained and provide context to the

decisions made and executed at the time. The book reflects the background of its author, Graham Rhys-Jones, a retired Royal Navy officer whose career spanned from ship's operations to strategic naval planning. He is not without academic credentials, however, for he both attended and taught at the U.S. Naval War College. (See Graham Rhys-Jones's "The Loss of the *Bismarck*: Who Was to Blame?" in the Winter 1992 issue of this journal.) His combined academic, planning, and operational background enables him to provide an operational context for the battleship's destruction. More importantly, he demonstrates how Germany's and Britain's lessons learned in previous twentieth-century naval operations shaped their actions in and responses to Operation RHINE.

*The Loss of the Bismarck* contends that Admiral Raeder was a man totally wedded to the idea of major surface combatants operating as "raiders," attacking an enemy's ocean commerce. Raeder's naval vision called for "surface raiding groups" operating on the high seas, powerful enough to overwhelm most convoy escorts but fast enough to escape fleet engagements. The two-ship *Bismarck* class was to be Germany's initial post-World War I class of battleships; the *Bismarck* and *Tirpitz* were designed with the raiding mission in mind. These ships were fast and powerful and had a long cruising range but were of a design that essentially represented an update of late World War I practices. The never-built follow-on H class was to have been the primary class of German battleships, optimized for raiding operations against the full range of modern naval threats. Unfortunately for Admiral Raeder, the war started too soon for his dream battleships to be



built, and the war's early operations found the much cheaper U-boats enjoying far more success at commerce raiding than his surface ships. He saw the prospects for his "surface raiding groups" retreating into the background. This feeling was reinforced in 1941 by the need to transfer nearly half of his carefully husbanded fuel reserves to the German army for the invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece and the planned invasion of the Soviet Union, as well as the sudden requirement to supply fuel to the oil-starved Italian navy. His hopes were revived, however, in late March 1941 when Vice Admiral Gunther Lütjens returned from Operation BERLIN, a surface-raiding sortie involving the two battle cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* that destroyed over 115,000 tons of British shipping. Emboldened by Lütjens's success and believing that the future of his surface ships was at stake, Raeder ordered an almost immediate *Bismarck* deployment, despite his staff's and Lütjens's objections and the lack of supporting forces.

From that point, Rhys-Jones depicts the operational picture available to the respective commanders, from Britain's Commander in Chief Home Fleet, Admiral John Tovey, and Admiral Raeder down their chains of command to the commanders at the scene. What follows is a chess game in which the reader sees what the commanders saw, and (unlike in previously published books) understands why those commanders acted as they did and how those actions affected the overall operation. It is a revealing and fascinating look into the fog of naval war.

Thus the reasons for the decisions of Admiral Lancelot Ernest Holland aboard HMS *Hood* become more apparent, as

do the tactical and operational impacts of those decisions on the other players, such as Admiral William Wake-Walker aboard the cruiser HMS *Norfolk*, trailing the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen*. Britain's naval operations and heavy losses around Crete, the German invasion of which was under way concurrently with Operation RHINE, were weighing heavily on British commanders. They could not afford a mistake in either the Mediterranean or the Atlantic. German decision making was hampered by inconsistent and unintegrated intelligence support, and it was inhibited by a complex naval command structure in which Vice Admiral Lütjens worked for no less than three admirals in seven days—Admiral Raeder and Admiral Saalwächter, who coordinated operations in the Atlantic, and Admiral Carls, who was responsible for naval operations in the North and Norwegian Seas. Neither country's navy executed its respective intentions perfectly, but postoperational analysis indicates that the British had at least learned their World War I lessons better. They also then applied the lessons of Operation RHINE more effectively to their post-1941 operations.

Both books provide an insightful, balanced, and fascinatingly fresh treatment of a well reported naval event, and they complement each other well. In addition to the revelations discussed above, both expose design and equipment problems that reduced *Bismarck's* readiness and combat effectiveness, but *Loss of the Bismarck* does better with the faults of British ship designs. Both show how ULTRA contributed indirectly to *Bismarck's* destruction, but once again Rhys-Jones applies the naval context better; more importantly, he presents the German intelligence picture, highlighting the



impact of Germany's failure to integrate its intelligence. However, Rhys-Jones all but ignores America's involvement and fails to include much of the German materials that detail the political factors driving Admiral Raeder and explain the naval staff's objections to executing Operation RHINE in May 1941. Neither book tells the story completely; but if one must choose, *The Loss of the Bismarck* provides a better naval story, while *The Destruction of the Bismarck* provides the better strategic treatment.

CARL O. SCHUSTER  
Captain, U.S. Navy, Retired  
Kailua, Hawaii



Strachan, Hew. *The First World War: To Arms*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001. 1,127pp. \$39.95

What began as a single-volume replacement of Oxford University Press's long-running World War I survey (*A History of the Great War*, by C. R. M. F. Cruttwell [1934]) has, in Hew Strachan's hands, burgeoned into three mammoth volumes, of which this is the first. The second, we are told, will cover the years 1915 and 1916 and will be called *No Quarter*. The third and final volume, entitled *Fall Out* (reader be warned that the first volume has been in the making since 1989), will pick up in the winter of 1916 and push through to the end of the war.

Since this first volume alone runs to 1,127 pages, readers will want to know how this book differs from an already crowded field. The answer is that it looks at topics—origins, war planning, tactics, munitions crises, morale—in a broad

comparative context. No blundering great power is unfairly singled out.

As is obvious from the subtitle, the book is about the origins of the war, mobilization, and opening campaigns. To rephrase what has already been written many times over by battalions of historians is no easy task, but Strachan rises to the challenge. Better yet, he works through all the latest literature in English, French, and German to provide the most up-to-date interpretation of the war's outbreak. In common with most historians, Strachan points to the shakiness of the German Empire and its nervous quest for status and security as the main causes of the war. A chief abettor was Austria-Hungary, whose own military had become so enfeebled by the continuous Vienna-Budapest budget skirmishes that war in 1914 appeared the only way to rally the monarchy behind a much-needed program of rearmament. Similar calculations prevailed in Russia, where the tsar hoped that mobilization in defense of Serbia would heal political wounds and stop a politico-economic strike wave that had escalated from 222 strikes in 1910 to 3,534 in the first half of 1914. France and Great Britain appear more benign; Strachan concludes from the most recent French scholarship that there was no real war fever in France—*révanche* was a slogan of certain pressure groups. Britain was hamstrung between its fleet and "continentalists" clustered around General Henry Wilson.

Strachan's analysis of the competing war plans is excellent. Regarding the Schlieffen Plan, he describes Moltke the Younger's growing unease with the seven-to-one ratio set by Albert von Schlieffen to overweight the "right hook" through Belgium and Holland

that would envelop a French thrust into Lorraine. Although Wilhelm Groener and B. H. Liddell Hart later blasted Moltke for his timidity—he reduced the ratio of troops on the right wing to those on the left to three to one—Strachan points out that “an army would [not] behave as a united mass, gaining impetus on its right specifically from the weakness of its left,” for an army “is a combination of individuals and not a weight obeying the laws of physics.” That is precisely the point: the Schlieffen Plan was undone not by its relative weighting but by inadequate transport and insoluble problems of supply. Each German corps required twenty-four kilometers of road space, and there was just not enough of that on the right wing once the Belgians tore up their railways and Holland was foreclosed as a corridor. Add to this the fact that no fewer than 60 percent of German trucks had broken down by late August 1914, and it is easier to explain the German floundering at the Marne. There was also the small problem of French resistance. Having begun the war with tactics that were notoriously “perplexed by the problems of firepower,” the German army faced French forces, commanded by Field Marshal J. J. C. Joffre, that hacked five entire German corps to pieces in the last week of August and the first week of September 1914. Strachan’s larger analysis of this Battle of the Marne is interesting. The German high command’s initial response to the defeat—Moltke and thirty-two other generals were dismissed—was to blame individuals, “to make the debate about operational ideas, not about grand strategy.” In fact, the Marne was a strategic failing that *should* have discredited the kaiser and his army, which “had failed to succeed in its prime role.” Yet there was no

healthy introspection or self-assessment; the imperial army would simply hammer away for another four years.

In contrast to the western front, hammering seemed to work in the East, where the Germans shattered the Russians at Tannenberg and the Austro-Hungarians achieved some early successes in Galicia. However, there too the war stagnated for logistical reasons; with Germany committed on the western front and Russia’s strength divided by French demands for an attack on East Prussia, it was difficult to mass troops and artillery *anywhere* on the eastern front, and yet more difficult to move them, given the poverty of communications.

Although the production of this three-volume history of World War I will take far longer than the Great War itself took to fight, readers willing to enter the trenches with this first volume will be rewarded with a kaleidoscopic and elegantly written presentation of the great issues and problems raised by the war’s origins, campaigns, and home fronts.

GEOFFREY WAWRO  
*Naval War College*



Uhrowczik, Peter. *The Burning of Monterey: The 1818 Attack on California by the Privateer Bouchard*. Los Gatos, Calif.: Cyril Books, 2001. 170pp. \$12.95

I am a resident of Monterey. Everyone here knows about the Carmel Mission and Father Junipero Serra. Colton Hall, where the California Constitutional Convention was held, still stands, as a preserved historic landmark. Cannery Row likewise remains, though John

Steinbeck would barely recognize it. Then there is the hidden history of Monterey.

Recently the biography of Thomas ap Catesby Jones revealed an episode in which the city was seized in the name of the United States. A quick withdrawal after a festive party was required upon the revelation that the war with Mexico had not begun (*Thomas ap Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny*, by Gene A. Smith, Naval Institute Press, 2000, reviewed in the *Naval War College Review*, Spring 2001). More recently, *The Burning of Monterey* has appeared to reveal another fascinating episode in the town's history.

In November 1818 the capital of Alta California fell into the hands of rebels from Buenos Aires, the principal city of the newly independent Provincias Unidas del Rio de la Plata, today's Argentina. The privateering commander was Hipolito Bouchard. Born in France, he had sailed from Argentina around the world seeking to attack Spain's assets from South America to Madagascar to Manila, through the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands, and on to Monterey. Bouchard started the journey on *La Argentina* and picked up the Philadelphia-built Argentinean vessel *Santa Rosa* in Hawaii. The crew of the *Santa Rosa* had earlier mutinied off the coast of Chile and found their way to the Sandwich Islands, where they sold the ship to King Kamehameha I. Bouchard obtained the *Santa Rosa*, placed it under the command of Peter Corney, an Englishman, and replenished the crew with whatever ragtag collection of Europeans and Polynesians he could find. Then Bouchard and his crew sailed on to the California coast, where they captured

and burned the town of Monterey, saving the Presidio church (today San Carlos Cathedral) and the mission at Carmel.

Until now, we knew of Bouchard only from cursory paragraphs in local history brochures. Peter Uhrowczik has delved into archives in Californian and Argentine libraries. From original sources, he has given us the most comprehensive work available about Bouchard's 1818 attack on Monterey. This study places the events in the context of its times. One learns nuggets of facts that could not have been easily discovered by studying other histories of the period. For example, the end of the War of 1812 created a slump in Baltimore's privateering industry, which, at least indirectly, made these ships and crews available to the insurgents in the Spanish-American revolutions. The business of privateering was not for the faint of heart. Bouchard encountered the slave trade, scurvy, mutineers, and pirate attacks in his journey around the world. As a consequence of Bouchard's raid, the Anglo-Saxon population of Alta California increased from three to five persons; one of the newcomers was an officer taken prisoner in Monterey, and the other was a Scottish drummer who had deserted. The author has been thorough in providing maps and illustrations so that the reader can visualize the geography of California as it was during the Spanish occupation.

This history is fascinating and entertaining. The contrast in reputations of Bouchard in Buenos Aires and in Monterey is striking. In Argentina, Bouchard's monument sits in the middle of a small plaza honoring him as a brave patriot. In California, those acquainted with Hipolito Bouchard tend to regard

him as a pirate, not a privateer. The distinction between a pirate and a privateer is a fine one separated by a thin letter of marque (as provided for in the U.S. Constitution). *The Burning of Monterey* gives us an understanding of an interesting man who lived in

turbulent times, from the perspectives of both those who admire and those who detest him.

XAVIER MARUYAMA  
*Naval Postgraduate School  
Monterey, California*





*Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island,  
11 September 2002*

## FROM THE EDITORS

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### WINNERS OF NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW PRIZES FOR 2001

***Hugh G. Nott Prize.*** The President of the Naval War College has announced the winners of prizes for the finest articles (less those on historical subjects) appearing in the *Review* in 2001:

- First Prize (\$1,000), Andrew L. Ross, “Thinking about the Unthinkable: Unreasonable Exuberance?” Spring 2001
- Second Prize (\$650), Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., “Military Experimentation: Time to Get Serious,” Winter 2001
- Third Prize (\$350), Chris Rahman, “Defending Taiwan, and Why It Matters,” Autumn 2001.

***Edward S. Miller History Prize.*** Through the generosity of the distinguished historian Edward S. Miller, the President of the Naval War College has awarded the Edward S. Miller History Prize (\$500) to the author of the finest article on a historical subject to appear in the Naval War College Review in 2001: Commander Richard Mobley, USN (Ret.), for “*Pueblo*: A Retrospective,” Spring 2001.

*These awards are made with the support of the Naval War College Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of the educational resources of the Naval War College in areas where government funds are not available.*

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Pelham G. Boyer, Managing Editor